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An Interpretive Study of Traditional Sayings: A Dialogue Between Language and Pedagogy

by

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A THESIS

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Abstract

While traditional sayings are often associated with pedagogy throughout Western history as well as in oral cultures, paroemiologists, that is, researchers and collectors of traditional sayings, are inattentive to this association. The purpose of this study was to probe the nature and the experience of traditional sayings in order to uncover the pedagogic voice within traditional formalized language, such as proverbs, maxims, mottoes, apothegms, precepts, aphorisms, axioms, and adages. The study deals with research published in the French and English languages and uses traditional sayings from around the world and throughout history. Traditional sayings are seen as a phenomenon of traditional formulaic language which, in usage, brings a text to bear on a context.

Through a hermeneutic approach, traditional sayings are probed as an interplay between rational explanations and lived experience. The fundamental question which guided the study was : What makes it so difficult to understand how it could be said that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice? In chapter one, an attempt is made to situate the study within a world which is increasingly preoccupied with technology. The importance of the main question is shown to be part of a quest for a more humane world.

Chapter two is presented as a stock-taking of what is known about traditional sayings and how it is known in order to be able to suspend this knowledge. The constant link that history makes between traditional sayings and pedagogy is highlighted. The functional structuralists' orientation of paroemiology is given in order to show how its rigidity does not respond to the subject of the study. The difficulties in paroemiological research and its inattentiveness to pedagogy leads to the urgency of considering the phenomenon of saying with the words of tradition from a different approach.

When understanding is blocked, the hermeneutic method is a natural recourse because it aims to restore rational understanding within experience and preunderstanding. The fact that we can ask the question about the pedagogic voice of traditional sayings in the first place speaks to the experience that we have of them. The hermeneutic method of Paul Ricoeur is presented

as a way of recovering the nature of this pedagogic voice.

In order to come to an understanding of how it is that we can say that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice, the hermeneutic method lets us turn first towards the text of the language of experience. In the phrase "traditional sayings," there is the word "tradition." Chapter four is an exploration of the language about tradition in research on traditional sayings. It is then an effort to restore the experience that we have of tradition. The main difficulty that is encountered lies in an orientation towards individualism, towards I, which covers the voice of togetherness, the voice of the We.

The second word of traditional sayings, that is, "sayings," tells us that next, we need to turn to language in order to further our understanding of how language speaks. Chapter five is an exploration of how traditional sayings speak pedagogically. We-ness is presented as the voice which speaks within language. Emanating from the form of language, togetherness gounds an understanding of the pedagogic experience.

Since traditional sayings are not only objectifications like the words "tradition" and "language," chapter six situates traditional sayings in daily experiences and reviews their usage. This chapter brings the themes of togetherness and separation, We and I, to actual usage situations. The difficulty of saying that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice is evidenced by the demonstration that traditional sayings may not always be used pedagogically.

The concluding chapter shows how pedagogy favours a four-way responsibility: that is, a response-ability between agent, intent, tradition, and language. When agent and intent (or goal) control the usage situation, they subjugate language and tradition. If language is allowed to speak, it will unfold tradition and form with the usage situation. The pedagogic voice of traditional sayings lies first and foremost in an attentiveness to all the elements of the usage situation.

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I. Introduction

A. Context for the study

Traditional sayings are the focus for a study of language and pedagogy at a moment in human history when decisive changes are taking place. Following the tide of technology, our mode of consciousness is shifting human endeavours in new directions and placing new values on the horizon. Tradition, language, knowledge, and pedagogy are witnessing profound interpretive mutations in their valuative and cognitive connotations at this moment in history.

From a contemporary perspective, tradition is often seen as an outdated value system. Viscerally, we wonder if Pac-Man is not becoming more important than the traditional God. Which is more powerful? Which has more influence in changing our lives? The struggle between Pac-Man and God symbolizes the changing order. Can tradition be held to? Can it be reinterpreted for an increasingly technological world? Some see tradition as a barrier to progress rather than as a possibility for new vistas. Others see in tradition an order which must be altered or retrieved. Ecologists, for example, demand a return to a consciousness which reunites humans and nature, feminists advocate a liberation from the patriarchal traditions, and socialists denounce capitalistic norms. To the perspectives, "*Can* tradition change?" and, "It *must* change," is added a third view which names the virtual death of the traditional domain. With the growth of the value placed on individualism comes the shrinking of the public arena. Maxine Greene speaks of the "deadness and emptiness of the public domain" (1982, p. 5) because the public culture, tradition, seems to have become meaningless for individuals.

Yet, traditional sayings stand as icons reminding us constantly of the importance of the public sphere, be it in cooperation as displayed in the following Swahili proverb "One stone will not support a cooking pot" (Scheven, 1981, p. 120), or in the authority bestowed upon those who have with them the knowledge of the past as in the Yoruba proverb "It is only in the mouth of the elder that kola is ripe" (Lindfors & Owomoyela, 1973, p. 44). The proverb

expresses esteem for tradition incarnated in the elders' wisdom, as symbolized by their opinion of the kola nut. Has this esteem become so outdated that tradition has lost its positive value in a world mainly oriented towards its future achievements? Whatever happened to the sayings "There is nothing new under the sun," or to the Japanese proverb "Through inquiring into old things, we learn the new" (Buchanan, 1965, p. 146)?

Today, language is often becoming a tool of persuasion for the right message. Traditional sayings such as proverbs are subjugated to the message of advertising. There is a sense of givenness, of objectification, which leaves language devoid of suggestiveness. The ideal of operationalization of language aims at establishing a one-to-one correspondence between signifier and signified, as in computer languages. The contemporary historical trend decreases the value assigned to poetry, metaphor, analogy, or allusion. Instead, words are gaining the power to sell rather than to suggest.

An old Egyptian proverb said that language is the rudder of the ship of human destiny: "La langue de l'homme est le gouvernail de son navire" (Maloux, 1960, p. 302). Perhaps, in a study of the usage to which language is put, as well as of its form and value, we can detect some characteristics which profoundly rule our lives.

In contemporary thought, knowledge and wisdom are separate. Education bestows knowledge, and wisdom is seldom valued. The separation between the two orders reveals a contemporary trend which values (apparent) neutrality and objectivity. Objectivity, as an ideal of natural scientific research, has guided learning away from the meanders of the personal, the lived, and the experienced world of knowledge. As a value, objectivity is an ironic reversal of the debate of individualism opposing tradition: the neutral, the objective, has overridden the subjective and the individual. Yet, objectivity appears neutral while it is not. What knowledge offers, instead of neutrality, is a retrieval from acknowledging judgment and values as inherent in facts. This is the separation between knowledge and wisdom. Currently knowledge, as objective facts, demands that individuals judge and decide for themselves on ethical matters. Wisdom, on the other hand, acknowledges the judgment and the direction for

conduct within knowledge itself. The contemporary valuing of facts over wisdom extends the negative connotations given to tradition by forcing a view that the ethical realm should become the responsibility of the individual, not that of tradition. On the other hand, the notion of wisdom propagates the view that tradition and communities have an ethical responsibility within knowledge.

As for the word "pedagogy," it is seldom used in English to refer to education. Words like "instruction," "methodology," and "curricula" are more current. In French, "pedagogy" has come to connote an instrumental approach to the teaching-learning context and thus has come close to the English terms of "instruction" and "methodology." Both instruction and methodology are pervasive activities which attempt to follow the models of the army, industry, and technology. The educational field constantly speaks of "strategies" and "objectives." Both are terms which refer to the art of ordaining a military campaign (Funk & Wagnalls, 1966); both terms suggest, without acknowledging it, that education could be based on a relationship of enemy tactics, and this, between teacher and student. Terms like "student management," "long-term planning," "input-output," "retrieval skills," "performance," "observed learning outcome" are frequent and all relate to industrial and technological jargons. The 1984 *Review of Research in Education* published by the American Educational Research Association further substantiates the trend in educational language. It speaks in terms of "human variance," of "treatment" and "status" of the severely handicapped, of "assessment" and "approaches to instruction and service delivery," of "impact," "intervention," and "trajectories." Herbert Walburg in the concluding article entitled "Quantification reconsidered," notes that "most of educational research is quantitive" (p. 369). His closing remarks attempt to substantiate further the historical trend. He recommends:

> Justified causal explanation should be the scientific basis of educational policy and practice. Generalizable experiments, well-designed observational studies, and data analysis can help justify causal theory and avoid causal fallacies. Research methods in the natural sciences suggest a number of improvements of these strategies that seem feasible and likely to be useful. (p. 400)

If Walburg's advice is followed, the current trend will be intensified.

Whatever happened to the spirit of the sayings like this Swahili proverb "To teach is to take good care of [one's children]" (Scheven, 1981, p. 383), or to the Siamese proverb which speaks of patience with children "Il faut enfiler lentement l'aiguille dont le chas est petit" (Maloux, 1960, p. 159)? The spirit of this question is being addressed more and more frequently by researchers/practitioners who interrogate the meaning of educational experiences. Although rallied under different banners,—phenomenology, hermeneutics, critical theory, historical culturalist—, or even under no banner, many are opposing the current trend. It is then in the new tradition of Ted Aoki, Michael Apple, Maxine Greene, Madeleine Grumet, Bill Pinar, and Max van Manen that the present study is inserted. Against the contemporary background for tradition, knowledge, language, and education, it attempts to come to an understanding of the meaning of pedagogy.

B. Questions

This dissertation, entitled *An Interpretive Study of Traditional Sayings: A Dialogue Between Language and Pedagogy,* is fundamentally a reflection on our modern way of life by bringing the past into perspective. It is a study wherein language speaks about its form, its content (tradition), and its usage. All are intimately tied to teaching and knowledge. Hence, the notions of tradition, language, and usage are questioned by presenting alternative modes of interpreting the phenomenon of traditional sayings, keeping in mind the following leading question: What makes it so difficult to understand how it could be said that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice? This question suggests sub-questions that will guide the unfolding, chapter by chapter, of the study. These are:

-How were traditional sayings seen in history?

-How do oral cultures see traditonal sayings?

-What is the form of traditional sayings, that is, what language characteristics do they exhibit?

-How are these language characteristics interpreted by paroemiological research (as the

study of traditional sayings is called)?

-How can these language characteristics be reinterpreted in a situational context?

-What are the contents of traditional sayings, that is, what do they tell about tradition?

-How is tradition interpreted by paroemiological research and how can this interpretation be reviewed?

-What happens when the form (language) and the content (tradition) of sayings are put in a context of usage?

-Can a variety of paradigms for usage be identified, and wherein lies pedagogy?

-Can language, tradition, and usage together tell us about a mode of being pedagogic that is distinct from the instrumental and mechanical view of instruction?

These sub-questions lead the inquiry. They deal each in turn, with language, tradition, and usage in order to present the sense of being pedagogic that is disclosed by traditional sayings. The questions follow a pattern which language itself guides. Traditional sayings are a form of language. Their content, or meaning, is anchored in tradition. Since they are "felt" to be pedagogic, then, what is pedagogic in the language (and content) of traditional sayings? When used in actual situations, this pedagogic voice is expressed, yet, sometimes, it is subjugated. When does the dialogue between language and pedagogy come to an end?

C. Rationale

A rationale for this study is found at two levels of considerations. One level gives the reason which guides the structure of the study. It answers to the question: Why did this study take the structure that it has? The other level names the focus; it sets forth why this topic became of significance at this particular time in educational practice.

On a first level, this study takes its point of departure in language, in the language of traditional sayings. This language encompasses three facets which originate in traditional sayings: the tradition of *traditiona*l sayings, the form of language, that is *saying*, and the usage

to which they are put. All three, tradition, form, and usage, provide the skeleton for the main analysis. Within this framework, pedagogy enters the scene because traditional sayings are associated with education. Consequently, knowledge as the content of pedagogy (and sayings) underlies all considerations. Sometimes, knowledge surfaces; at other times, it remains latent. Thus, this study takes the form and the content of traditional sayings as initial foci. Then, form and content are placed into a situational perspective in order to interpret their usage. Finally, the total relationship between language form, tradition, and usage is questioned in order to detect the pedagogical versus the instrumental usage.

On another level, that of educational practices, traditional sayings are brought to attention because they raise issues of importance to education. A study of the sayings of tradition does not aim to bring out of museums the dynasty of dinosaurs. Without being nostalgic for the past, it is an effort to reclaim pedagogy within language in order to meet better today's world more humanly. When faced by the ever more pervasive invasion of technology into our lives, our language, and education, we must reflect on the consequences of this trend which subjugates our consciousness. So invaded, "being human" may become a periphrasis that we hardly understand any more. Some traditional sayings have become such periphrasis. For example, "Whipping the devil around the stump" (Taylor & Whiting, 1958, p. 100) has little meaning today. It expresses a way of relating to the world that we have forgotten in the way we live the sense of the words "devil," "stump," and "whipping." However, the saying presents us with an alternate mode of relating to the world, an alternate to ours, one that has been forgotten.

Michael Oakeshott (1962) speaks about education as an initiation into an age-long conversation going on at once with others as a community and within ourselves. Through language, traditional sayings present the conversation of older to younger, of one to another. The public and the private domains are in dialogue. It is not with a desire of returning to the "good old times" that the present dissertation was written. The dialogue between the public and the private, the old and the new must be continued or restored so that a balance between

conflicting emphases can be struck. Education is this balance.

Ultimately, this dissertation is based on a belief, perhaps an intuition, that the social formalized language of traditional sayings, when not distorted by a dominating attitude from humans, speaks to us pedagogically. Furthermore, the dissertation was drafted within an attitude of concern for children who, traditionally, are the receivers of pedagogic instruction. Children are our future, the continuation of our race. "We need to take good care of them" says the Swahili proverb (Scheven, 1981, p. 383). Perhaps traditional sayings can help us in this wondrous and mighty task.

D. Dissertation outline

In chapter one, the study is introduced. An attempt is made to come to a self-reflective thrust of the dissertation. The main questions which guided the study have been presented in the above section. Upon reflecting on this introduction, the motivating question of this dissertation has been identified as: What makes it so difficult to understand how it could be said that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice?

In order to pursue the guiding question, chapter two explores what we know about traditional sayings. It is entitled "Traditional sayings in history and research." It reviews traditional sayings in history: antiquity, sixteenth to nineteenth-century Western Europe, and oral cultures. This survey shows that traditional sayings have always been seen as pedagogic. It is claimed that they have a mysterious didactic power. However, modern paroemiology is inattentive to this fact. The functional structuralist orientation of paroemiologists, researchers and collectors, is provided in order to show their insensitivity to the pedagogic voice of sayings. Problem areas of paroemiological research are identified: censorship, identification of the origin of sayings, and completeness of collections. However, the major difficulty remains in the inability of research to take seriously the situatedness of sayings. Paroemiology, because of its structuralist orientation, is unable to respond to traditional sayings. Sayings become sterile objects which fulfil their functions in the wheels of societies. Chapter two is proposed as a

counter chapter. It is a chapter which identifies what we know about sayings, and how we know it, in order to suspend this knowledge and proceed to listening and to searching anew.

How then can we understand the difficulty of being able to say that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice? When difficulty of understanding becomes the main topic, the hermeneutic tradition appears a natural resource. Chapter three, then, presents the hermeneutic method of Paul Ricoeur as an alternative to the structuralism of paroemiologists. It begins with an initial definition of the term "traditional sayings" in order to give focus to the topic of study. The hermeneutic tradition is reviewed. A recapitulation of the pitfalls of paroemiological research indicates how a hermeneutic study approaches the phenomenon of saying with the words of tradition. Methodology becomes a travel after *methodos*: the Greek origin of the word "method." The hermeneutic method is a journey which takes the researcher through the countryside of a phenomenon. Yet, journeying is returning many times to the point of departure. The hermeneutic quest is guided by the leading question: How is it that we are able to say that traditional sayings are pedagogic?

In employing the hermeneutic approach, one naturally looks at the words one has at hand: "tradition" and "saying." In order to understand traditional sayings, tradition has to be first understood. Chapter four begins the journey. Tradition is the content, the fabric of traditional sayings, yet, we have so lost the sense of what tradition is that the words which speak about it have to be turned and turned again in order to provide insights as to the experience which grounds them. Words have to be questioned in the light of experience. Chapter four takes language about tradition and attempts to interpret the experience within it: objectification, personalness, nonpersonalness, distanciation, authority, world view, ideology. To the difficulty of interpreting language is added the difficulty of focussing on the experience of tradition. Two streams are constantly flowing: union and separation, I and They, liberation and ideology, authority as wisdom and authority as ideology. The sense of We-ness that tradition gives is constantly jeopardized by its opposite: separation and domination. Traditional sayings allow for the recovery of togetherness.

The second part of the phrase "traditional sayings" is the word "saying." One has to turn next to language and ask: In what way can it be said that language speaks with a pedagogic voice? What speaks in the saying of sayings? Chapter five seeks a clarification of what it means to say that language speaks. Through traditional sayings, We-ness speaks of being together or of being drawn apart. We-ness restores human existence within the voice of language. The examples of proverbs and maxims lead an interpretation of their lived context. Through the elements of language, familiarity, orality, brevity, simplicity, and polysemy, the quest for an understanding of language directs us again to an interplay between union and separation. Proverbs and maxims show the difference of relationships that language allows: from participation to contemplation, from togetherness to domination, from presence to absence, from feelings and sensations to reason, from suggestiveness to directness. Within the different relationships lie two basic modes of inhabiting the world: as I or as We.

However, traditional sayings are not only abstractions or objectifications like the words "tradition" and "language." They are also a saying of tradition. They are uttered in everyday life, seen in advertising, read on billboards, or spoken in the home or classroom. A mother or father mindfully admonishes a child with a saying she or he remembers from a grandparent. Chapter six brings tradition and language into usage situations. The relationships detailed now deal with actual contexts. Situatedness is restored to its fullness. An initial probing of the research gives four categories of usage situations. When traditional sayings are used, a relationship of communion is first established. This understanding verifies the We-ness of the earlier chapters. Descriptive usage of sayings offer a cognitive grasp on the reality of the world. It tenders a condensation of experience which concurs with the context of usage. Prescription can mobilize language into a relationship of domination, as in the advertising slogan. Prescriptive usage separates text and context and, therefore, must be used within a readiness for dialogue in order not to become indoctrination. Finally, through exploration usage of sayings, transformation of formalized language leads to alternate possibilities. Exploration shows that the dialectics acceptance-rejection and old-new lead to liberation. The

four types of relationships identified further the themes of union and separation. They express different modes of living union and/or separation.

The question which directed the quest resurfaces in the concluding chapter. How is it that it is so difficult to understand that it can be said that traditional sayings are pedagogic? The interpretations have been diverse and we could speak of pedagogic *voices*. But, this fragmentariness into many voices is evident because the totality of the experience of pedagogy is still programmatic. This dissertation is an effort towards the understanding of pedagogy in its fullness. At this point it can be said that traditional sayings teach us that pedagogy lies in an attentiveness to the voice of language, not only to our own speaking and intentions. Language is co-responsible with usage. Let language speak, and pedagogy will enter into a dialogue. Union and separation will each fulfil their roles. Chapter seven is also a reflection on the journey of dissertation writing and an indication of pedagogical implications for education.

E. Conclusion

Jean Paulhan in an article entitled "L'expérience du proverbe" states:

> C'est dans le passage d'un état à l'état opposé — et, si l'on veut, d'une observation à l'observation contraire — que tient tout le jeu du proverbe. A la réussite de ce mouvement est attaché son succès. (1966, p. 124)

The dialectical relationship between two opposite states, as Paulhan puts it, reflects the game that proverbs display. This constant movement leads to success, interpreted as understanding. Primarily, the dialogue between the explanation and the understanding of traditional sayings is of importance. I want to show that this dialogue is a pedagogical language which is of importance for modern educational practice.

II. Traditional sayings in history and research

A. Introduction

This chapter examines the literature on traditional sayings. The intention can be exemplified by the Yoruba proverb "If a person does not know who is rowing him, he does not know where he is going" (Lindfors & Owomoyela, 1973, p. 47). Much has been said about proverbs, proverbial phrases, or traditional sayings. Past research and commentaries provide a pre-established path which guides inquiries. They row the boat, as in the Yoruba proverb. Once the path becomes explicit, the present research will be in a position to know why a change of direction is necessary and, more importantly, how this change should occur. This chapter is presented as a counter chapter identifying what we know about traditional sayings and how we know it in order to suspend this knowledge.

The first section of this chapter attempts to show, by choosing examples from antiquity, Western Europe, and oral cultures, the constant link between traditional sayings and education. To this presentation is added a coming to perspective of the modern debate between the learned and the common people. This debate is underlined by differing values of knowledge, from the rational to the a-rational (nonrational or irrational).

The second section reviews the orientation adopted by twentieth-century collectors of traditional sayings as published in the French and the English languages. On the one hand, historical repertorialists attempt to uncover the earliest form of a saying. In this endeavour, they are not concerned with the didactic nature of traditional sayings. On the other hand, the collection oriented repertorialists amass sayings in order to provide direct instruction, entertainment, enrichment, or rhetorical tools. The orientation of repertorialists is geared to instrumentalism as it is disclosed by the methodological issues of retrieval and censorship.

The third section details the orientations favoured by studies on traditional sayings. These studies create a theoretical body of research which was almost nonexistant before the twentieth century. More precisely, after their advent at the beginning of the twentieth century,

paroemiological studies remained general in nature under the aegis of folkloristics. Studies since 1940 are more specific and are situated within disciplines. On the one hand, studies in psychology, anthropology, and literature have taken a theoretical stance which tends to elaborate theories of human, social, and/or psychological cognitive processes. These are categorized as demonstrating *la langue* orientation. On the other hand, studies in history serve to reconstruct a specific historical period. In anthropology and folklore, studies stem from a perspective of functional usage. All these studies recognize the situatedness of sayings; they dwell in *la parole* orientation. Furthermore, in experimental psychology and in education, traditional sayings are used as tools. It is paradoxical that the very discipline which discusses education only researches sayings instrumentally, without questioning their pedagogic nature. The review of the literature brings to the foreground many questions which will recur in the dissertation. It also brings to evidence methodological problems which lead to the seeking of a new methodology. The following review of the paroemiological tradition is divided in three sections: traditional sayings in history, repertorialists, and studies on traditional sayings.

B. Traditional sayings in history and pedagogy

Throughout history, attitudes towards traditional sayings have differed according to many factors: the social class to be educated, the class carrying on the educating, the role and prestige of education within the world view, the kind of knowledge valued, the nature of the educational act, and the valuation of the language form. Among the various attitudes, two constants remain, however, throughout history: the (almost) universality (ubiquity) of traditional sayings, and their relationship to education. Krappe (1930) introduces the constants in this way:

> This didactism no doubt is responsible for the fact that the proverb is pretty well ubiquitous, being found among non-European races no less than among the ancient Greeks and Romans, the medieval Irish and Icelanders and the modern nations which are the support of Occidental civilization. Again the Maori of New Zealand may help to make this clear. Their proverbial lore, all handed down orally, as goes without saying, is truly astounding and easily puts in the shade the sum total of ancient proverbs that have come down to us from the Mediterranean civilization. (p. 143)

It is the task of this section to establish the historical link between sayings and pedagogy. This will be done on the premise that traditional sayings are a language phenomenon common to most civilizations (known and unknown). However, it will not be the task here to establish the universality of the phenomenon, mostly because it is a matter which can, at best, only be hypothesized. It is impossible to survey all civilizations at all times in order to establish this constant as a fact. Furthermore, in the context of a dissertation on traditional sayings and pedagogy, it is not desirable to pursue this issue since it is not directly relevant to the topic. Then, the position taken will be, following paroemiologists, that traditional sayings are likely to be a universal phenomenon.

In this section, the association between traditional sayings and pedagogy will first be examined in antiquity. The section emphasizes the long standing link between sayings and pedagogy. Sayings are also presented as the direct or indirect origin of our contemporary mode of thought. Secondly, since Western Europe has had a direct influence in North American thought through history, and even today through the English and French languages, the attitudes towards traditional sayings from the Middles Ages to the nineteenth century will be traced. Finally, since oral traditions afford us a look at preliterate cultures, they provide a third type of situational attitudes to sayings.

1. Traditional sayings in antiquity

The antiquity of traditional sayings is widely recognized (Taylor, 1962; Maloux, 1960). It is speculated that sayings originated with the dawn of civilization (Taylor, 1962, p. 5). In the ancient civilizations of the Egyptians, the Hebrews, and the Greeks, traditional sayings were highly respected didactic genres. For the ancient Egyptians, (4000 to 1200 B.C.), what we call a proverb was called *sebayt*. It literally meant teachings. As an example, we have from the book of proverbs *Sagesse d'Aménopé,* "Un caractère bon est la protection de l'homme" (Maloux, 1960, p. 2). The teaching through saying is, within Egyptian thought, linked to the *maât*, a notion of order which gives each cosmic and human element a preestablished place and

role (Gitton, 1975, p. 451). Chaos is never far away and order is constantly menaced. Order is protected by the correct implementation of rites and sayings. Teaching is legitimated within the necessity to ward off chaos and to maintain harmony. Hence, the notions of teaching and proverbs are intimately linked. The proverb is the teaching in view of the importance of maintaining the *maât*. Its regulatory role allowed for a necessary cooperation and harmony among diverse elements. The saying of proverbs is part of an exorcising of external cosmic elements.

McKane (1965), as he follows the evolution of proverbs from *La Sagesse d'Aménopé* to the Hebrew parallel of the proverbs of Solomon, links the teaching and the word to social classes and religion. He states:

> Instruction (*Proverbs* 1-9) was appropriated by Israel as early as the reign of Solomon, when a class of officials came into existence to serve the new structure of the state, and when there was a consequent need for Instruction with the same educational function as it had in Egypt. There, it was located in schools where an *élite* was trained for the service of the state; likewise, when Solomon created a civil service (perhaps on the Egyptian model) there would have been a demand for a similar type of school and for such an instrument of vocational education. (pp. 8-9)

Proverbs (Aménopé and Solomon) are then part of teaching in the form of instruction. Originally in Egypt and Israel, the proverbs served the education of an élite who aspired to positions of responsibility and power. However, for the Israelites, education became integrated to broadly-based community instruction. Eventually, proverbs were assimilated in the fabric of Yahwistic piety and became the instruments of its propagation. McKane concludes: "In Egypt, [...]a means of educating officials, became in Israel a method of generalized mundane instruction and thereafter a way of inculcating Yahwistic piety" (1975, p. 10). The abundance of proverbs which were handed down from the *Bible*, in particular from "The Book of Proverbs" is a good example (Andrews, 1958, p. 120).

For the Greeks, *gnôme* thought, and *paroemia* instruction, referred to traditional sayings. The words referred, not to any teachings, but to the most important of teachings, that of wisdom. Traditional sayings were thought-full words, laden with prudence and perspicacity and they were derived from the communal tradition. Aristotle saw in proverbs the remains of

ancient philosophies which were much more open to the search for the truth and wisdom than were subsequent philosophies (Tuet, 1789, p. 27). Aristotle's definition of proverbs is much quoted by paroemiologists. He defined it in this way:

> Proverbs are fragments of ancient wisdom preserved amid wreck and ruin for their brevity and aptness. (1926, p. 85)

Alster (1975), in his study of an ancient Sumerian text entitled *The Instructions of Suruppak* (ca. 1800 B.C.), also associates traditional sayings and pedagogy. The traditional poem studied contains numerous proverbs which he analyzes as to their source. As for their role, he states, from an examination of small school tablets that,

> This shows that the Sumerian proverbs are transmitted in a literary context, and they may be expected in some manner to have met the needs of scribal education. These needs could be the followings: 1) The proverbs could serve as simple models for the students who had to exercise themselves in copying. 2) The proverbs could form part of the education of the schools on a larger scale, by illustrating good and bad manners through the wisdom of the old, and by providing the students with a repertory of useful rhetorical phrases to be used in literary contexts. (1975, p. 13)

Although Alster's interpretation of proverb use in Sumerian schools may be an understatement with regards to their pedagogical importance, it is thrilling to think that "The slanderer turns like a turncoat" (p. 57) was used in the Sumerian schools of almost four thousand years ago in order to teach prudence with regards to people who made unpleasant comments about people.

It can then be stated that traditional sayings in antiquity are linked to education. Although their context of interpretation and usage differed from Egypt and Israel, Greece and Sumer, the association between sayings and pedagogy is a constant.

2. Traditional sayings in Western European civilization

French and English sayings emerged gradually as the languages themselves were formed. Their emergence followed similar paths. In her first introduction to the *Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs* (1935), Janet Heseltine has pointed out that proverbial sayings, generally of a sententious nature, can be found in religious manuscripts from the first half of the eight century onwards. Occasionally, brief collections of sayings were inserted, half in the vernacular and the whole in Latin, in order to facilitate the teaching of Latin to a novice

(Wilson, 1970). The Middle Ages and the sixteenth century were the golden age of traditional sayings. Gradually, however, traditional sayings were divided into two categories. The proverb was associated with the common people or rural life. The maxim became the symbol of learned traditional formalized speech. In the split between proverb and maxim emerges differing attitudes to learning and pedagogy.

Sayings in the Middle Ages

Adages, proverbs, maxims were assembled and transcribed repeatedly in the Middle Ages. The manuscript collections fell into two categories: traditional sayings attributed to ancient sages and philosophers like Aristotle, Seneca, Cato the Elder, to name a few. These were published in Latin. The second category of collections gathered vernacular sayings that were attributed to peasants or common people. These were usually called proverbs.

The use of Latin collections of sayings attributed to philosophers remained within the confines of the literate, learned circles. However, peasant proverbs were used by the peasants themselves, and by the learned people. This can be exemplified by the nature of the sayings. In all likelihood, some of the sayings did have a genuinely rural or common origin, but they had been modified for use by nonpeasants. Two facts taken from French history can exemplify this position. On the one hand, the metaphors of the sayings drew upon objects familiar to country folks, oxen, horses, dogs, grains, fallow fields, and were sometimes coarse or ribald. The popular proverb "Ben parler ne counchie bouche" (Greimas, 1968, p. 129) refers to the belief that nice words do not dirty the speaker. The term "counchier" is coarse in that it associates speaking and excrements. A variation of the same proverb is found in a fabliau:

> Teus cuide cunchier autrui,
> Qui tout avant cunchie lui. (Schulze-Busacker, 1978, p. 165)

This demonstrates the common origin of proverbs which were modified and used by nonpeasants in literature. On the other hand, traditional sayings were in old French rather than in the regional dialects peasants spoke in the Middle Ages and they were translated in

Latin (Davis, 1975), which demonstrates a further modification of common, rural sayings.

Usage and collections of the Middle Ages display the importance of the pedagogic use of traditional sayings in the Church, the courts, and literature. They also indicate the beginning of a split between learned interests and common usage as evidenced by two kinds of collections separating literary from common sources of sayings. In nonpeasant circles, traditional sayings were used by knights and clerks to supplement their own store of language. Writers such as Chaucer and Chrétien de Troyes (Altieri, 1972) included them in their writings. They were used in legal courts as rules of common sense. Preachers used them as a way of setting up a common universe of discourse and of helping people to remember the sermon's message. The sayings that peasants used spontaneously as part of their stock of knowledge and view of life were taken over by collectors, clerics, knights, and writers. All delighted in the form of the traditional saying: its generally balanced structure and its brevity. Its very compactness, they thought, helped to convince and to persuade. While everyone enjoyed the sayings, the experiences they had of traditional sayings were different between peasants and nonpeasants.

For the peasants, in a primarily unlettered and still quite local, quite restricted world, traditional sayings were an essential resource of knowledge and of advice for action. For example, the proverb "Tels cuide avancier qui recule" (Schulze-Busacker, 1978, p. 165) brings to the peasants advice to mistrust their sense of confidence in themselves. The sayings bring crystallizations of knowledge from which actions can be derived. For the literary and the learned people, sayings were simply helpful tools and additional devices. The peasant's stock of sayings was memorized and learned by ear in concrete situations in childhood and adolescence. It was all the more weighty because of its assumed connection with local or regional tradition, and it probably increased very little during a generation in a village (Davis, 1975, p. 243). The stock of sayings of learned persons was also, in part, acquired in situations during childhood, but it was enlarged by reading at school and afterwards. It was further enriched by translations of foreign sayings. This stock of knowledge was partly memorized,

and then more likely by rehearsal than by living usage, and partly left in books. This presents a different attitude to, and experience of, sayings from the peasant's living of sayings. Literate persons did not depend totally on their memory; books presented the knowledge they did not possess in their head. Furthermore, sayings were not essentially derived from personal experience; some sayings were learned as one would learn something which is foreign to one's immediate concerns, like the name of the signs of the Zodiac. In short, sayings of the Middle Ages display an emerging split between the literate and the common people. The differences lie in the gradual valuing of abstract, nonpeasant, nonrural knowledge.

The above distinction between literate and common usage of sayings and the transformation of rural proverbs into their nondialect counterpart points to the gradual valuing of written knowledge and of abstract categories of thought on a scale vaster than ever before. Pedagogically, sayings served different purposes in the two orders: in peasant life, sayings were powerful and participative guides for action; in the literate world, sayings gained an ornamental and more contemplative role. However, within both perspectives, sayings were deemed to play a major role in education.

Before leaving this section on traditional sayings in the Middle Ages, a final point must be made in order to situate the nature of tradition in a historical context. The Middle Ages offer, through proverb usage, an attitude towards traditional language that we have lost. The originality and individualism so prized today may have been regarded by the Middle Ages as a confession of poverty. Chaucer might have regarded the question :"Why do you not make up a brand-new story of your own?" as irrelevant, unimportant, and even shocking (Jamieson, 1975, p. 188). The importance of entering tradition with its own words cannot be minimized and the Middle Ages delighted in it (Davis, 1975, p. 243). The attitude was that reformulating the old into the new was important. Spontaneity was not the norm for all social talk and, in fact, talks in large groups were monitored and judged with many of the same criteria as for more elaborated and rehearsed programmes (Abrahams, 1977, p. 424). The use of traditional sayings took a particular perspective of pedagogy: the insertion of students into a well

developed public domain of tradition. Usage conjured familiar images for all present. Personal interpretations were less important.

Sayings in the sixteenth century

In the sixteenth century, two new dimensions were introduced to the usage and collection of traditional sayings: national tongue and embeddedness. First, learned interests intensified. To the old practical, moral, and didactic reasons for collecting sayings was added a new concern: the enrichment of the national tongue (Davis, 1975). In France, for example, sayings were linked to the development of the vernacular language. As the scholar-publisher Henri Estienne was to say in 1579 in his *Précellence du langage françois* (1896), the range in subject of the vernacular proverbs and the grace possessed by some of them proved once again that French could compete in power and beauty of expression with Italian, Greek, and Latin. Traditional sayings followed the apologia for the legitimation of the vernacular tongue and the 1606 first edition of *Trésor de la langue françoise tant ancienne que moderne...Reveu et augmente...par Jean Nicot... avec une grammaire françoise et Latine et le recueil de vieux proverbes de la France* attests to the legitimacy the vernacular had achieved by the end of the sixteenth century and to the importance of proverbs in that development. Similarly, in England, John Heywood in his *Dialogue of Proverbs* (1545/1963) "conteinyng the nomber in effect of all the prouerbes in the englishe tongue" furthers the importance of the vernacular through proverbs. A survey of English health books came to the same conclusions. Woodburn (1975) states that it was in the special rhetorical device of the proverb that vernacularists found both a subtle and effective answer to Latinists and purists. The effectiveness of the vernacular in medical writings indicated the eventual victory of English over Latin and the fact is that, during the last half of the sixteenth century, no collection of sayings bothered with translations of common sayings into Latin. The vernacular had won.

Secondly, in 1500, Erasmus published *Adagia*. It was immensely popular comprising some 800 sayings in the first edition and more than 4000 by 1530 (Davis, 1975, p. 243). Although he presented only sayings from ancient Latin, Greek, and Hebrew writers, Erasmus

offered a new way of studying traditional sayings. To him, they were a window on the ancient world. Sayings are so embedded in their cultural context that they present to the user and observer, centuries later, a different perspective on the world. Erasmus thought the context to be so important that he admitted in his introduction that some sayings need to be quoted in their native tongue, otherwise, just as some wines refuse to be imported, they lose much of their charm. Erasmus's view of the embeddedness of sayings brought a new dimension to collections: a need for contextual interpretation. Charles de Bouelles, in 1557, published *Proverbes et dicts sentencieux avec l'interpretation d'iceux*; it stands as the first example of a trend that has lingered since in paroemiological studies. Sayings are not only listed but explained and interpreted. They often referred to the peasants' life and work. The popularity of interpretation is also seen in the literary tradition which speaks of the inseparability of sayings from their context, their illustrations, and interpretation:

> But more important was the influence of the rhetoricians, who illustrated their dicta by proverbs, a fashion which spread from a narrow trickle to the wide channel of Chaucer, Gower, and Lydgate, in whose works proverbs new and old reflect life in cottage and court, in foreign countries or in the smallest English hamlet, where the saws of husbandry, many still current today, were passed through the years from father to son.
>
> By the sixteenth century, the channel was becoming a torrent. (Wilson, 1970, p. viii)

The artistic tradition of the sixteenth century parallels the literary tradition and collections expressed the view of the importance of context for sayings. Art still had a teaching purpose: aesthetics and didactics had not yet been separated. A painting had value only to the extent that it fostered knowledge acquisition for the observer. Foote notes:

> L'amélioration des connaissances demeurant encore un des objectifs de l'art à l'époque, une peinture n'avait de valeur que dans la mesure où elle était didactique. (1970, p. 141)

Moral teachings were prevalent themes of paintings. Illustrations of sayings, particularly proverbs, were not new to the sixteenth century: they had long since been used in prints, tapestries, and paintings. However, the sixteenth century saw a proliferation of proverb illustrations of which Pieter Bruegel the Elder's *Netherlandish Proverbs* (1559) is the most well known. The illustration of one proverb, or literally the orchestration of many of them as in

Bruegel, speaks to the embeddedness of the sayings. Bruegel's *Netherlandish Proverbs* is of particular interest here and will be elaborated on briefly.

Bruegel, in his proverb illustration, takes as his point of departure the World Upside Down motif of the broadsheet prints (Kunzle, 1977, p. 198) as expressed by a globe and a cross hanging upside down above the doorway. Bruegel situates the proverbs that he illustrates in a "typical" Flemish village. The proverb "Tomber en gâchant le panier" (Bianconi, n.d., p. 94, # 85), meaning to ruin one's chances by one's own fault, shows a Flemish peasant falling through a large woven basket from the roof of a house. Bruegel's realism is much noted (Kunzle, 1977; Foote, 1971), and by expressing proverbs in realistic pictures, he situates the saying in a likely context. Furthermore, his orchestration of proverbs has a moralistic value:

> "This is the way peasants really *are*": in saying this, Bruegel was not denying that the urban and upper classes were immune to such follies; far from it. But he was reinforcing the idea of the lower classes as the characteristic repository, and in some sense the true source of irrational and foolish behavior. He was "putting the poor in their place," like the typical literary Proverb compilation of the age. (Kunzle, 1977, p. 202)

Bruegel's *Netherlandish Proverbs*, then, has a didactic value: it depicts human folly in the peasants, in as much as a realization of reality is didactic. Here, a depiction of reality serves a repressing role of telling the peasants that they are irrational and foolish. Illustrations bring the context to mind just as in the saying "A picture is worth a thousand words." The interpretation is directed by the context of peasants.

Hence, the differing uses of traditional sayings between learned and peasants of the Middle Ages are becoming more pronounced during the sixteenth century. On the one hand, there is an apparent reconcilation through the pride in the national tongue, the vernacular. On the other hand, this reconcilation is only apparent because the language of the peasants is still a dialect different from the vernacular of the literate. Furthermore, the realization of the embeddedness of traditional sayings into situations brings a corollary of the difference in socio-economic status that emerges between the peasants and the class of the educated and the literate people. Although traditional sayings served to advance the cause of the national tongue, their didactic use, cognizant of situatedness, witnesses the power struggle between

classes. Kunzle (1977) is of the opinion that:

> One may suspect that the Proverb in general, illuminated by Erasmus, exemplified by Luther, and passing into theater, pulpit, classroom, and common discourse as well as pictures, became at this time a major means of moral indoctrination of the lower classes by a newly entrenched, but still important bourgeoisie in a period of continuous social conflict. (p. 199)

Kunzle (1978) associates the proliferation of World Upside Down Prints and proverb illustrations to the need for a dominating class to enforce its hegemony. The more the unrest boils, the more proverbs are printed. However, as he points out, the phenomenon of proverb illustrations can serve two goals. On the one hand, a proverb like "The blind leading the blind" illustrated by Bruegel in 1568 (Bianconi, n.d., p. 111) can teach the blind the foolishness of trusting people like them through a portrayal of reality. On the other hand, a realization of foolishness may bring action to remove the foolishness. Literally, in the case of the blind, it may lead the blind to ask someone who sees to guide her or him. Similarly, the saying "For the hay to go after the horse is perverted" is interpreted in the following manner by Bruegel in a caption below its illustration (Kunzle, 1978, p. 69): "Mark this, you girls who offer yourselves so shamelessly. It is not proper for you to court the young men; but it is proper for the horse to go after the hay." While the saying presents the status quo, it also, by its negation, affirms the alternatives. A woman is like hay, a man is like a horse, so says the interpretation of the proverb. But, in the affirmation, it is also saying that a woman *could* be like a horse, and a man could be hay, figuratively speaking.

Returning to peasant unrest in the sixteenth century, proverb proliferation could evoke both alternatives: the status quo and the nonstatus quo. The peasant revolt of 1525 in Europe, particularly in Northern Europe, follows, according to Kunzle, the Protestant Reformation which had legitimated resistance to the authority of Rome (1978, p. 62). "The dung beetle searches for the eagle" was a saying commented upon at great length by Erasmus in 1515, as translated by Phillips (1967, pp. 47-71). Whereas Erasmus was of the opinion that there could be no end to war between equally vile combatants, the peasants dared to affirm themselves: "In history, the beetles were destined to prevail" (Kunzle, 1977, p. 202). Can it be said that

traditional sayings and their proliferation in the sixteenth century served exclusively to preserve the status quo? Surely not. The sixteenth century was a period of renewal and change. Traditional sayings contributed to the changing order. Their importance in social regulation cannot be denied, nor can their role in affirming alternatives which were previously being ignored. Yet, the role that hegemony is starting to play symbolizes the changing order.

In the sixteenth century, social organization was based on increasing exploitation of nonrenewable resources, such as coal, iron, copper, silver, gold, tin and mercury, on an inexorably expanding market economy, and on a preindustrial division of labor (Merchant, 1980). Social organization increasingly revolved around an ideology based on domination by humans. As compared to the ancient Egyptians where humans were to submit to cosmic order, the sixteenth century offers a slow but unidirectional division between humans and world; humans are becoming the dominators of the natural and human world. Perhaps, more expressive than any other historical documents is the *Tower of Babel* (1563), again by Bruegel the Elder. The senseless endeavour of challenging the cosmic powers as seen through the story of building a mighty tower to God is reinterpreted by Bruegel as an actual feat of sixteenth century progress in architectural design and building methods. Bruegel still belongs to the old ideology by denouncing human endeavour as senseless, yet, at the same time, he recognizes preindustrial material advancement:

> La tour désigne encore la folie orgueilleuse des hommes, mais elle suggère en même temps les forces créatrices de la société. Elle offre la vue grandiose d'un chantier de construction, d'un port de mer et de tous ses entrepôts, de l'interdépendance économique d'une cité commerçante et de son arrière-pays. Elle figure Anvers, elle exprime les espoirs de surprenants pouvoirs humains. (Genaille, 1966, p. 7)

These newly discovered powers over the world extended to the rise of a bourgeoisie and were possible only to the extent that humans (the mass or the peasants) would provide labor and be dominated. In this context, the usage of traditional sayings would be close to teaching as indoctrination. But, as our analysis will later indicate, the preindustrial popularity of sayings, while fostering indoctrination also allowed for emancipation. Their popularity is tied to social unrest, not to social apathy.

Overuse and a changing perspective of the world led into the age of Reason: Classicism. Interest in more sophisticated, embellished, polished speech (and life) set out a rejection of the organic, *down* to earth, *down* to experience perspective rendered by proverbs while it glorified the maxim as a tasteful genre.

Traditional sayings in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed a discredit of proverbs in favour of maxims. The traditional sayings genres shifted in values. The seventeenth century shift was due to two causes. First, all the progressive solidification of absolute monarchy in seventeenth century France and England led to a desire for the superimposition of government upon the ungovernable realm of unreason: the passions (Harth, 1975, p. 20). The seventeeth century, with its tendency to see in reason the solution to social evils, realized that humans are not rational. A proliferation of traditional sayings speaks to this realization:

> Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît point; on le sait en mille choses....est-ce par raison que vous aimez? (1670) (Pascal, 1962, p. 192)
> L'esprit est toujours la dupe du coeur. (1665) (La Rochefoucauld in Maloux, 1960, p. 92)
> Man without reason is a beast. (Wilson, 1970, p. 666)
> Reason governs the wise man and cudgels the fool. (Wilson, 1970, p. 666)

The heart, or the passions, overrule reason. The ideal was to domesticate the beast in human beings because unreason, heart or passions, were associated with bestiality and animality. The treatment of insanity is enlightening here. The insane were treated as animals and domestication was seen as the remedy. "Animalité déchainée, on ne peut la maîtriser que par le dressage et l'abêtissement," says Michel Foucault in his *Folie et déraison: Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (1961, p. 182). Asylums contained cage-like rooms where inmates became part of a menagerie. The inmates were chained to doors, walls, or beds and were fed under surveillance, like beasts. They were to be trained and conditioned, like beasts that reason had caged. They were presented as spectacles and literally, the insane became the monsters of nonreason. Irrationality and passion were disdained by reason.

In this climate of an ideal of reason and a disdain for the irrational, Pascal preconizes the superimposition of government upon passion, the first order being the supernatural order. God is, in short, the utimate ruler. However, the temporal order is instituted by the king. It is no accident that the divine right of kings was so powerful in the seventeenth century. On the matter of the heredity of kings, Pascal states,

> Attachons donc cette qualité à quelque chose d'incontestable. C'est le fils aîné du roi; cela est net, il n'y a point de dispute. La raison ne peut mieux faire car la guerre civile est le plus grand des maux. (1960, p. 419)

Reason and religion, through sentiments, served to legitimate the system of government and the ultimate aim was to contain unreason within bounds.

Secondly, the sense of the social distance and social boundaries sharpened after the relative fluidity of the sixteenth century (Davis, 1975, p. 246). The seventeenth century exhibits an accentuation of separation of social classes and hierarchized form of government which was grounded in a necessity to control unreason by reason. So Pascal goes on saying,

> La puissance des rois est fondée sur la raison et sur la folie du peuple, et bien plus sur la folie. La plus grande et importante chose du monde a pour fondement la faiblesse. Et ce fondement est admirablement sûr, car il n'y a rien de plus que cela, que le peuple sera faible. Ce qui est fondé sur la saine raison est bien mal fondé, comme l'estime la sagesse. (1960, p. 51)

Pascal clearly spells out the necessity to rule over the foolishness of the people. In fact, it is this very foolishness that allows for the rule of reason. However, in this passage, Pascal expresses a disdain for the common people that is representative of his times. The social boundaries crystallized and permitted the learned and the ruling class to *look down* upon the populace.

Contiguous with social order, the sayings of the sevententh century witness a separation between the proverb, which is attributed to the common people, and the maxim, which relies on learned tastes. The above change of taste was expressed in three major consequences for proverbs and collections. First, while proverbs were still understood by the common people, they needed to be interpreted for and by the literate classes. For example, Davis offered the following:

> Later, Madame de Maintenon and others wrote entire plays based on proverbs that the audience was to try and guess. [...]around 1660, when Jacques Lagniet published his remarkable engravings illustrating popular proverbs, he had to add captions everywhere so they could be understood. (1975, pp. 246-247)

Hence, the interpretation trend in the sixteenth century, a trend which led to becoming conscious of the embeddedness of sayings indicated, a century later, a shift in social context.

Secondly, collections of proverbs overtly expressed learned disdain for the culture of the common people. Collections were made in order to have an instrument for the purging of errors. For instance, Antoine Oudin's *Curiositez françoises* of 1657 tried to unmask the errors in proverbs which, to his mind, should not be used (Davis, 1975, p. 247).

Thirdly, proverbs and folk knowledge were re-formulated to present the newly dominant perspectives. A study by Marc Soriano (1968) on the *Contes de Perrault* attempts to prove the thesis that Perrault was trying to remake old folk tales to serve modern causes; the immoralities of the stories could be changed to suit the needs of Christian education. Underlying the above view is a profound distrust of popular language. This distrust led to the disappearance of much of this popular culture. The dominant point of view available today is unmistakably that of the literate classes.

Proverbs, as traditional sayings, were demoted along with popular knowledge and the common people. Ronsard had already wondered whether familiar proverbs were suitable for courtly poetry and now, the arbiters of French taste insisted they were not (Davis, 1975). Vaugelas in his *Remarques sur la langue française* (1647) refused to admit the term "proverb" in his discussions. The proverb had become too coarse. Its organic, metaphorical language remained for the peasants and the uneducated. The seventeenth century favoured the more refined prescriptive teaching of the maxim and the proverb disappeared from literature (O'Kane, 1950, p. 360). The nonmetaphorical language of the maxim appealed to the rational mind, an appeal which was considered of greater taste. The maxim "Ce n'est point être vaincu que de se rendre à la raison" (Maloux, 1960, p. 443) is acceptable while the proverb "Envoyer quelqu'un au diable de Vauvert" (Tuet, 1789, p. 385), to indicate that one has been sent

further than he or she thought, is unacceptable.

In the eighteenth century, proper "social attitudes became a precondition for any experience as well as for any meaningful discourse" (Cottom, 1980, p. 367). The thesis presented is that education and literacy are preconditions for valuable and valued perceptions and expressions. The sayings "*De gustibus non est disputandum*," "Chacun à son goût" (Cottom, p. 367), "Des goûts et des couleurs il ne faut pas discuter" (Maloux, 1960, p. 231), "Everyman to his taste" (Wilson, 1970, p. 805), were rejected. On the contrary, tastes were to be discussed and only the tastes of the educated were really *tasteful*. The social and cultural distance between the learned and the common people had widened. Two examples will be offered here.

The first example refers to Jean-Charles-François Tuet, who published in 1789, the *Matinées sénonoises*, a work on proverbs. He presented proverbs in a historical perspective and saw them as the product of an earlier stage of human culture. They were produced in an age when people were unable to reflect, took things on face value, spoke little, and expressed themselves in short sentences. Hence, says Davis (1975), "the language perfected itself, it pulled away from the proverbial style and rejected with disdain all words that were lowered by passing too often through the mouth of the people" (p. 256).

The second example is drawn from literary writers. Voltaire said in *Siècle de Louis XIV*,

> Les maximes sont nobles, sages et utiles. Elles sont faites pour les hommes d'esprit et de goût, pour la bonne compagnie. Les proverbes ne sont que pour les vulgaires. (1878/1967, p. 487)

An interesting study done by Calvez (1980) concludes that

> Voltaire preferred sententious utterances and proverbial expressions to the regular proverb form. Also whenever he used a proverbial expression of any sort he appeared to seek an excuse for doing so. His most frequently used devices for this purpose were to attribute his proverbial citations to famous people who had used them before him, or to admit to his correspondents that he was actually daring to use proverbs by presenting them in a modified form, sometimes by transforming their context, sometimes by substituting one work for another, sometimes by reversing their meaning, sometimes by accumulating two or three into one, sometimes by accumulating several of them in a series, and sometimes by alluding to them in ways that put him at a distance from this lowly form of speech.

Proverbs were not an acceptable part of what was considered *bon ton* in France. Voltaire's position is paralleled in England by Lord Chesterfield's attitude. He emerges as a spokesperson for the disfavour that proverbs had incurred in England when he told his son that to use proverbs was to show that he kept in "bad and low company." Bad company, he went on to say, is that of "footmen and housemaids" (quoted in Whiting, 1977, pp. xiv-xv).

Traditional sayings in the form of maxims are directly associated to education. Favouring the maxim indicated, per se, the importance which education had gained in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. History, through traditional sayings genre had indicated a link between education and language. This is of importance for the present dissertation because it brings into focus social conditions of language and education. A contrastive interpretation of the proverb and the maxim will show, in chapter five, the pedagogical experience of each genre. However, as the interests shown in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries expressed, the shift is grounded in a perspective of reason where irrationality is low and vile.

The above review of traditional sayings in history associated traditional sayings and education. However, it has been shown that, as they evolved in Western European civilization, and as examples from England, France, and Europe demonstrated, sayings became the scene of a battle between learned and common people's interests. They also led a debate between rational and a-rational concerns. The former leading to control and order, the second leading, apparently, to disorder. Thus, traditional sayings are didactic but, as history unfolds, positive values are placed upon particular genres; this reflects the dominant mode of thought. Initially, proverbs were seen as didactic; they became demoted and one had to be educated before the learned didactic value of sayings was recognized through the maxim. History superimposed a double dimension to the educational value of traditional sayings: from didactic in the case of the proverb to a learned didactic tradition in the case of the maxims.

3. Traditional sayings in oral cultures

Traditional sayings have been part of the guiding, oral tradition of virtually all nonliterate peoples. They are, for them, the voice of tradition educating the new generation in the rudiments of life. For example, according to Arewa and Dundes (1964), one of the most important uses of Yoruba sayings is in the training of children. Sayings as the voice of tradition make possible "social indoctrination" of the children in a standard, uniform manner beyond individual parental initiatives. Furthermore, the use of sayings allows the parent the responsibility to train a child who, by his or her status as a child, must obey. Traditional sayings, as authoritative statements, set the stage for pedagogical purposes. For example, Lindfors and Owomoyela relate that the saying "Sorrow doesn't kill, reckless joy kills" (1973, p. 11) is used to comment on a child who is being spoiled by material things and who behaves in an undisciplined manner. Parents will say it to the child to warn her or him about the "evil of excesses" and irresponsibility.

In both the Fulani and Yoruba cultures of Nigeria, sayings are taught to young people as part of their educative and initiative process, along with dances, songs, riddles and stories (Kalter, 1980, p. 57). Kalter also points out the intimate link between education and traditional sayings by indicating that children are called *bilki'en* or imperfect speakers of a language. The expression is used to express disapproval of the conduct of young men and sayings are considered to be the language *par excellence*, the code of moral and aesthetic values (Kalter, p. 57).

Messenger (1959) shows the use of sayings in African legal rituals where an advocate of a cause uses sayings to prove the validity of an argument. The case is won by the person who knows best how to apply the sayings he or she knows to the problem at hand. As for the Yorubans who have a saying which states "A counsellor who understands proverbs soon sets matter right" (Finnigan, 1981, p. 28), the Annangs are impressed and convinced by sayings. Messenger relates many examples of justice being made through argumentation in courts. Here is one:

> In another case the precept "Something happened to the smoke which caused it to enter the bush and become mist" was employed by a person accusing a former friend of assault with a machete during a heated argument. The plaintiff wanted the court to know that he disliked bringing charges against the defendant in light of their former close association, but was compelled to do so because of the severity of the attack. He compared himself to smoke which rightfully belongs in the compound but which has been forced out into the bush by the wind to become mist. Witnesses were introduced to support the accusation, and later the defendant claimed that they had been bribed by his opponent to testify in the latter's behalf. The accused attempted to show the justices that, although posing as a friend, the plaintiff was in reality a jealous enemy who had chosen this means to discredit him, ending his exposé with the adage "A leopard conceals his spots." (1959, p. 69)

The example is interesting because it displays the importance sayings play in the Annang's way of doing justice. To learn the sayings of one's culture, in this case, becomes a measure of survival and self-defence.

Similarly, the Zulu people of Africa give utmost importance to traditional sayings. Nyembezi (1963) says:

> They [proverbs] have a definite purpose which they are made to serve, viz. to teach [...] As a social unit, the people have certain definite ways of behavior or conduct, which are expected of the individuals comprising the social unit. Some modes of conduct are embodied in proverbs, which serve the purpose of instructing the younger and ignorant generations, or serve as reminders to the old, who have been remiss in their observance of the rules of conduct expected in the society. (p. 41)

Zulu proverbs tell of religion, "Something is reserved for the ancestral spirit" (p. 195); of hospitality, "A kindness is reciprocated" (p. 51); of deception, "You told me with mud in the eyes" (p. 69). Through proverbs, the Zulu people inculcate the notions which are valued in their culture.

The point of view of an oral culture in the process of coming under Western influence is also enlightening. It expresses a change of attitude towards traditional education. In Jamaica, traditional sayings used to transfer knowledge between the old to the new generation until Western education began to influence the attitudes towards ancient forms of wisdom. In the denial of the value of old sayings, Jamaicans express that a new mode of education in now valued. However, the very denial affirms that traditional sayings were pedagogical. The fact is that now, their type of pedagogy is no longer valued. Anderson and Cundall (1910) state:

With the spread of education, the use of proverbs has a tendency to lessen, and the

> negroes display a certain amount of diffidence about using them, at all events before *bockra*. If asked the meaning of a somewhat obscure one, they will not infrequently plead ignorance. "Me no know," "Dat's only a sayin." Some of them affect surprise, or even indignation, when a proverb is quoted against them, and will say "Hi! wha dis Bockra get all dem old time saying!". It seems fitting therefore that those which can be collected should be put on permanent record. (p. 10)

Then, traditional sayings were associated to pedagogy but a change in value of ancestral education brought about their disfavour. This change is symbolized by the event of *brocka*: the coming of "the white man."

Much of the research in paroemiology takes the form of anthropological collections in oral societies throughout the world and, it is a notable constant in these research that they, directly or implicitly, note the educational importance of sayings. They also note that traditional sayings must be saved from oblivion.

4. Conclusion

This section reviewed the association of education and traditional sayings in antiquity, in Western Europe, and in oral cultures. It has been shown that traditional sayings embody a definite pedagogical nature. They prepare the younger generation, minimize social frictions, provide continuity between past knowledge and present practices. Their importance was sensed in antiquity and, although the body of research is meagre on the topic, links can be made between sayings and pedagogy. Their historical importance in France, England, and Europe in general, has brought major modalities to educational practices. Some are linked directly to social class, indoctrination, and subservience through devaluated forms of sayings; others are akin to an emphasis on reason and on the value attached to the literate social classes. Traditional sayings in history have displayed a constant reference to their pedagogic nature but, more importantly, the pedagogy of traditional sayings became tied to the social conditions of usage. This trend was presented through the rise in importance of the maxim. The interest will now be shifted to the nature of studies on traditional sayings through the collectors' orientations in order to prepare further the direction to be adopted in the following chapters.

C. The collections of the repertorialists

In paroemiology, great effort is devoted to the collection and preparation of lists of traditional sayings. The present section restricts the study of repertoires to the twentieth century and to those published in the English and French languages. A survey of these repertoires indicates two trends. First, the historical repertorialists (Wilson, 1970; Whiting, 1977) accumulate sayings from the past. These are chosen for their ability to represent a historical period. The hope is that by working chronologically, the earliest example of a saying can be detected. Secondly, repertorialists like Taylor and Whiting (1958) and Scheven (1981) collect and publish sayings as comprehensive data. Their hope is that almost all sayings have been collected from a particular period in history, often modern or contemporary history. The following section, while presenting two trends in repertoires, identifies the goals articulated by each group of repertorialists and designates methodological issues and assumptions related to the didactic power of traditional sayings.

1. Historical repertorialists

Many repertorialists have continued the search for the origin of traditional sayings. Their goal is to discover the earliest example of a particular saying. Their search (Stevenson, 1948/1965; Caufield, 1908/1968; Apperson, 1969; Wilson, 1970; Whiting, 1977) is based on a criterion of accuracy although it is acknowledged by Apperson (p. vii) that only "an approximation of accuracy" can be achieved. The origin traced, often traceable solely in literary sources, makes crucial the popular versus literary source of traditional sayings. The question is always (Apperson, p.vii): Is the first evidence of a saying, as offered to us in print, genuinely the earliest, or was it said and used by everyone before a writer inscribed it forever? This question is fundamental to the origin of formalized thought, language, and sedimentation. Repertorialists have struggled with this problem which may invalidate their orientation. Stevenson (1948/1965) views it in the following manner:

> The English quotations have been taken from literary sources whenever possible, with their exact location indicated, but in very many instances their first appearance in

> print was in one of the collections of the early paroemiographers, as they liked to call themselves. Rarely indeed is one permitted to sit in at the birth of a proverb, or to name its author. The lines of Homer which have become proverbial, and the maxims which Solomon is supposed to have assembled had no doubt been in the mouths of the people, though perhaps in cruder form, for many generations before Homer and Solomon immortalized them. (p. v-vi)

The issue of origin relating to the popular versus literary source is also formulated in terms of acceptance and rejection of sayings. Taylor (1931, p. 35) views the notion of popular in its sense of common, of being accepted by a group. Origin, to him, is closely linked to a *bon mot* which is accepted by a group. Taylor rejects the communal composition theory of sayings by believing that sayings originated with individuals. This *bon mot* is then accepted by, and transmitted within a community. However, it was not the community who composed the saying.

More recently, the question of origin is treated dialectically: the popular and the literary answer each other to create a saying (Loux & Richard, 1978). Fundamentally, the issue speaks to the dialectic between individual and tradition, a dialectic which results in a change of the tradition. The primary goal of the historical repertorialists to discover the earliest example of a saying is then an attempt to document historical evidence. However, their goal is unclear in view of the basic question of what constitutes an authentic origin: literary source, individual *bon mot*, collective creation, collective acceptance.

Historical repertorialists have a second goal: to include completeness of historical variations by obtaining examples of the interpretations and/or forms of a saying throughout the ages. For them, traditional sayings are historical documents. These documents are interesting because they are a recapitulation of past views on specific topics. History is an evolutionary force and traditional sayings are a detached, objective phenomenon to be observed and used today. Historical repertorialists take a detached stance and endeavour to reclaim history. As such, their goal is only indirectly didactic. It is by extension that the reader can learn from the lessons of history. The repertorialists do not, however, attempt to make these lessons explicit; they are content to exhibit the documents and leave the teaching to others.

2. Collection oriented repertorialists

The collection oriented repertorialists expressed a greater diversity of goals than the historical repertorialists: from sheer accumulation, to instruction, to entertainment, to enrichment, and to rhetoric. Pressed on by the menace of what they saw as the possible disappearance of traditional sayings in Western, Oriental, as well as so called "primitive" civilizations, repertorialists published innumerable articles and books. They attempted to save the lore before it slipped from memory. "Are our collections complete?" (Taylor, 1969, p. 369) expresses a nagging fear of collection oriented repertorialists. Their primary criterion is completeness. Collections in books and articles become akin to archeological or anthropological museums. Like museums, the collections of traditional sayings exhibit the items, one by one, or in organized groups. They are remnants from a past or from a present which is considered primitive. They stand like icons and artifacts of a different way of life. Some book collections also mingle today and yesterday: they offer an heterogeneous accumulation of familiar and foreign sayings to the reader.

According to Fogg (1929), Foreman (1971), Abrahams (1977), Whiting (1977), DesRuisseaux (1978), and Lafleur (1979), traditional sayings have been a source of information to be used for reference, as aids for memory, or as truths for consultation. Instruction further received moral connotations as "direction for the mind and the heart" or for the "edification of soldiers and their glorification to the public" (Ketterson, n. d., p. vii). Collectors do not detail, nor explain how instruction is to be achieved. The assumption which underlies their activities is that traditional sayings are essentially, in themselves, instructive. They acknowledge a mysterious pedagogical power emerging from the sayings themselves, independent of their contextual usage. It is presumed that contact with traditional sayings will instruct. The person who has been instructed through contact with traditional sayings will, in turn, instruct others.

Further to instruction as a dispensing of prescriptions and facts, collectors added the goal of personal enrichment for the reader. Traditional sayings were also seen as a help in

personal development (DesRuisseaux, 1978; Linn, 1881/1970). To the assumption that sayings offer instruction, is adjoined the taken-for-granted belief that they also draw out individual development. For de-velopment, from the Latin *de* away, and *voluper* fold, to occur, there must be a mysterious force unfolding elements of potential that are already present in the individual. Traditional sayings are almost intuitively assumed to possess such a drawing out power.

Furthermore, instruction and personal development are presumed to take place in a pleasant manner. It was hoped (Bohn, 1857/1968; Fogg, 1929) that the reader would also be entertained by traditional sayings. One "was to have been not only entertained but helped by its perusal" (Linn, 1881/1970, p. v). To "Mix business with pleasure" is a goal pervasive in industry as well as in teaching and learning. Traditional sayings are assumed to have the uncanny quality of teaching in a light, entertaining manner. It is with pleasure that we ponder over sayings like:

> There is great force hidden in a sweet command. (Hazlitt, 1907/1969, p. 446)
> To love as the beaver loves the willow. (Whiting, 1977, p. 23)
> Mentir comme un arracheur de dents. (Lafleur, 1979, p. 367)
> Donner un coup d'épée dans l'eau. (Lafleur, p. 224)

Thus, business and pleasure are mixed for the collection oriented repertorialists.

Finally, traditional sayings are presented for their rhetorical use. Underlying the sententious oratory potential of traditional sayings, many repertorialists see them as *aide-mémoire* used by orators, politicians, and public speakers. To read a collection of traditional sayings is to prepare for later oratory discourse. This rhetorical power in sayings is, in part, expressed through their stylistic dimension. Lafleur (1979) states: "Evidemment, comme de toutes les bonnes choses, il ne faut pas abuser de ces locutions. Mais un écrivain qui sait s'en servir peut obtenir un effet de style qui n'est pas banal" (p. v). It is through style that an audience is stimulated and kept attentive. Furthermore, a saying serves as a *résumé* of the opinion presented. Stenstrom (1973) notes the rhetorical usage made by church orators: "And what about the great folk orators in our congregations? They construct their sermons on a foundation of proverbs" (p. 801). As an example, Andrews (1958) builds sermons on

proverbs as *résumés*. The sermons become an exposition of a position like: "There comes a day when men are willing to call their children Paul and their dogs Nero" (p. 122). When placed in its context, the saying is as follows:

> Nero may sit in his chariot as it clatters up the Capitol hill at Rome with a train of captives behind, and Paul may languish in a Roman jail, but the day does come when men are willing to call their children Paul and their dogs Nero. (p. 122)

Sayings like the above serve a rhetorical purpose because they are *résumés* of an orientation to be acquired by an audience.

The above goals of collecting and publishing traditional sayings identified by repertorialists themselves include a saving for posterity, instruction, personal development, and rhetorical usage. These goals direct innumerable questions as to the power which allows these perspectives. To set the above as goal or purpose of collections does not indicate how instruction occurs, how entertainment takes place, why sayings need to be saved, how their power persuades. However, these collections recognize an enigmatically powerful pedagogy in traditional sayings. It is a power which is taken-for-granted by repertorialists who view their own task as that of presenting sayings as instruments for later usage.

3. Methodological issues

Retrieval of items

The goals of usage of traditional sayings in rhetoric or in teaching demand that retrieval systems become a methodological concern. Some repertorialists favoured an alphabetical indexing of sayings using the main word (Maloux, 1960; Boz, 1963), others used the theme, the subject or the intrinsic meaning (César, 1928-1929; Stevenson, 1948/1965; Apperson, 1969; DesRuisseaux, 1978), or even the author (Foreman, 1961; Oster, 1978). However, all agreed on the necessity of quick retrieval of the sayings desired, and most opted for two or three cross-referencing indices. This methodological concern points to the instrumental orientation of collectors within an unquestioned ethics of practicality.

Interpretation

Practicality presupposes that a given saying can be (re)interpreted by contemporary readers. To foster a contemporary interpretation, some collectors concentrate on reconstituting the original spirit of the time of the incident expressed in the saying (Fogg, 1929), or offer explanations (DesRuisseaux, 1978). One example is the following item in DesRuisseaux:

> MERITE
> **301.** La femme du cordonnier est toujours mal chaussée.
> -Le promoteur de quelque chose en est toujours mal pourvu lui-même.
> Dit, par exemple, par la femme pour chicaner un époux par trop charitable envers les autres mais non envers sa propre famille. Variantes: "Faut être la femme du cordonnier pour être mal chaussée," "Il n'y a rien comme d'être la femme du cordonnier pour être mal chaussée." (p. 85)

To reconstitute the situation is of utmost importance when the collection presents the sayings of a different culture particularly, an oral culture. For example, Nyembezi (1963) interprets the Zulu culture for the readers of the saying "The calabash with sour milk is broken":

> Sour milk forms an important item of food among the Zulus. Even if the food in the fields is not ready for consumption, if they have cattle, the people do not starve because they have their sour milk. When, therefore, a calabash with sour milk breaks, it is indeed, a great misfortune.
>
> This expression is used by a person whose only hope has been shattered. (p. 113)

The underlying assumption here is that sayings are culturally bound and that contexts need to be clarified for nonparticipants of the culture in order to interpret a saying in the "right" way, that is, the one corroborated by the culture. This assumption merges with a pedagogic concern for situatedness of teaching through examples, stories, and contextual descriptions. An underlying assumption is that learning or understanding occurs when more than the saying is offered.

4. Censorship

Collection oriented repertoires identify an inherent problem: censorship. Censorship, conscious or unconscious is understood here as the act of including or deleting sayings within a collection. Censorship is intrinsic in repertoires; how can a repertoire be complete and exhaustive? The problem, however, does not stand in the necessity to include or delete sayings,

but in the collectors' perception of the possibility of noncensorship, that is, in the possibility of not *ex*cluding any saying. First, some repertorialists admit to selecting certain sayings over others: "Some proverbs were considered trivial in character and have been replaced by others of greater interest" (Wilson, 1970, p. vi). Loux and Richard (1978) and Shimkin and Sanjuan (1953) point to a moral censorship of sexuality. Maloux (1960) admits that he excluded "les textes scabreux." Conscious censorship has taken the form of content selection. Secondly, style and genre selection has also occurred. A collection entitled *Maxims* always makes attempts to eliminate the inclusion of other genres such as proverbs. The many collectors who do not distinguish between genres make censorship choices at one point or another, be they in length, sentences versus phrases, or in fixedness of form, idiom versus *bon mot*. A malaise with such criteria, however, led to their relaxation. When admitted, conscious censorship is the result of a choice made by the repertorialist. Even though it is seldom recognized, unconscious censorship takes place through the politico-religious commitment of collectors and intended audience by revealing a desire to include certain traditional sayings to the exclusion of others. The most evident example is Ketterson's *On Active Service: A Book of Golden Thoughts* (n. d.). Probably published in Britain shortly after the First World War, it is an apologia for war, with such attitudes as: "The flower and chivalry of Canadian manhood rushed to arms to fight for freedom, and for those great principles for which our fathers were willing to die" (p. vii). It reads as a diary, a few thoughts for every day's edification in war. Evidently, such a book would exclude sayings like: "Kill a man and you are an assassin; kill thousands of men and you are a hero" (Beilby Porteus, in Foreman, 1961). Censorship, as the term is used in paroemiological studies, is seen as a problem because of the negative connotations of the term itself and because of the criterion for completeness. Censorship limits the possibility of completeness of collections. Such an orientation is in keeping with a view that traditional sayings are objects to be retrieved, used, and dispensed. Completeness of collections is an added dimension that indicates the possibility of comprehensive collections. Such a possibility is available only when sayings are seen as objective items.

5. Conclusion

Collection oriented repertorialists have voiced goals in keeping with an instrumental view of language and tradition. Sayings, to them, are objects to be amassed and presented for instruction, personal development, entertainment, and oratory purposes. Although these goals, except entertainment, carry a distinctly didactic flavour, the question of how a saying becomes pedagogic is not part of their standard questioning. The goal per se, however vague, is more important than a definition of the same goal. Although some have recognized the importance of experiencing traditional sayings through interpretation by including them into an explanation of cultural significances, this recognition is weak since the major goal is to reconstitute the context outside of the reader's experience.

The completeness, representativeness, and origin of the corpus of sayings are also essential goals and censorship becomes a drawback. For repertorialists, origin as a question, becomes a need to decipher which human agent was most responsible in the birth of a saying: the common people, the sage, or the collective psyche.

The criterion of completeness gives human beings the illusion of power: humans are capable of complete action (collections). It is a yearning for the last word to be said. Both these criteria, censorship and completeness, are in keeping with an instrumental view which places control of means and ends in human hands. On the other hand, it has been seen that historical repertorialists are less ambitious: representativeness suffices for them.

D. Studies on traditional sayings

Trends in paroemiological studies follow, as Hulme (1932) suggests, two main schools of thought: one based on *la langue*, the other on *la parole*. Both are at either pole of the rule or the event, the one or the many:

> While we find a striking similarity existing between the proverbs of various peoples, (seeing how the *oneness of humanity* asserts itself) [...] many being absolutely identical, and others teaching the same truths under somewhat *different* external guise, there is also in many cases a certain *local and individual colouring* that gives added interest. (p. 90, emphasis added)

La langue orientation to traditional sayings aims at the essential nature of sayings and/or humanity. Researchers attempt to make explicit the oneness of the phenomenon of traditional sayings by presenting the recurrent features across cultures. Studies following *la parole* orientation wish to (re)construct the social reality of a certain moment in history, past or present, through the analysis of traditional sayings. It is the task of this section to present both trends in research and to explicate the meaning of the terms *la langue* and *la parole* as guiding terminology.

In the following sections, a presentation of studies on traditional sayings has been limited to the twentieth century with emphasis on the literature since 1965. Only studies written in French or in English have been included. The principal organon of dissemination, *Proverbium: Bulletin d'informations sur les recherches parémiologiques* is published in Helsinki with a collaboration of offices in Warsaw, Athens, and Berkeley. It has been published three times a year since 1965. Other studies are published in anthropological, philosophical, psychological, literary, folklore, and educational journals. Traditional sayings stand at the crossroad of many disciplines, none of which takes them into main stream studies. Since 1970, however, traditional sayings have been considered to be prime examples of metaphors and have been given more consideration as an expression of nonliteral language. Traditional sayings studies in this section will mainly be divided between two orientations, *la langue* and *la parole*, and between the various disciplines and their respective concerns.

1. Studies from 1900 to 1940

Older studies on traditional sayings (Krappe, 1930; Hulme, 1932; Herzog, 1936) are general and present a medley of defining traits of proverbs and sayings. They note that frequency of repetition, brevity, and fitness for use are crucial for the survival of a saying. They indicate that sayings have "borne out the test of time," that their use in plain language makes them instructive. The tone adopted can be exemplified as follows: "The uneducated are quite willing to be supplied with happy arguments ready made and, having tested their efficacy,

are well content to abide by them" (Hulme, 1932, p. 17). Other paroemiological studies indicate a profound disdain for the common people, as the seventeenth century initiated. These studies are of a general nature and superficially treated, but they recognize a didactic essence to sayings.

2. Studies since 1940: *la langue* orientation

As traditional sayings and particularly proverbs became a topic of interest to academicians, the distinction between *la langue* and *la parole* orientations became clearer. The orientation of *la langue* reflects an influence of the French structural linguist's position initiated by de Saussure, of unhooking language from speech and searching for the structural elements or the dictionary within the text, in this case, the saying. The underlying aim of studies such as those of Milner (1969a, 1969b, 1969c), Barley (1972), Dundes (1975), Goodwin and Wenzel (1979), is to formulate "a system that may allow for comparison between cultures" (Barley, p. 737). They search the structural "essence" of the traditional sayings beyond their temporal existence and usage. Thus, the saying does not explain, nor is explained, by its social origin and nexus. This approach attempts to lead to a theory of theorizing, by rejoining an a priori of human thought structure, be it social or psychological. Milner states:

> If it can be shown that, in widely different ages, languages and cultures, important statements tend to be cast in exactly the same mould, it may throw new light on the deep structure of human mind. (1969a, p. 199)

James Kelly, in *A Complete Collection of Scottish Proverbs, explained and made intelligible to the English Reader*, has noted that many which he thought were genuine Scottish proverbs originated in other countries (in Wilson, 1970, p. ix). Kelly also observed that the mind of humans concerning elemental things is much the same the world over. The cross-cultural approach to traditional sayings is grounded in the view that sayings are a cosmopolitan phenomenon (Hulme, 1932, p. 90; Kuusi, 1973, p. 779), a "universal feature of theorizing" since most, if not all, human societies use traditional sayings (Milner, 1969a; Jason, 1971). As Hulme said: "[We see through proverbs] how the oneness of humanity asserts itself" (p. 90).

Milner questions how we can account "for the popularity and the nearly universal distribution of traditional sayings throughout the world, almost irrespective of time, place, level of technical and economic development, language or culture" (1969b, p. 200). The constant is that the phenomenon of traditional sayings occurs and the underlying hypothesis is that if it occurs, it must answer to some basic rules. Research has shown that such basic structures of sayings exist, however varied their content may be. The nature of the basic structure hypotheses depends on the discipline from which the study emerges. The discipline provides a secondary orientation.

La langue orientation in psychology and anthropology

The basic postulate of both psychological and anthropological studies of traditional sayings is that since sayings recur as a phenomenon, they must answer basic cognitive and/or social human modes of theorizing. The structural linguist's influence is found in the search for the grammar which rules psychological and social behaviour. Because traditional sayings are known to the subjects of studies, and because they are seen as a cross-cultural constant, studies attempt to map the cognitive features of theorizing which underly the phenomenon. These studies focus on one type of traditional sayings: the nonliteral or metaphorical saying.

In psychology, studies are two fold. On the one hand, studies, such as Brewer (1973), Douglas and Peel (1979), Honeck, Sowry, and Voegtle (1978), Kemper (1978), Saltz (1979), and Winner, Rosentiel, and Gardner (1976), ask the question of the age at which children are able to discern and use nonliteral and figurative language. For example, Douglas and Peel's developmental study is, similarly to others, an experimental research where 120 children were asked to interpret 18 sentences containing metaphoric or nonliteral language. Following is the last item of the test sentences.

The babysitter told the parents: "When the cat's away, the mice will play." (p. 117)

Douglas and Peel found that children were not able to translate proverbs until they have reached Piaget's formal operations period, at approximately grade seven (p. 119). However, children were able to discern dual function words like "He has a *shining* smile" at

approximately eight years of age, or grade three. Studies like Douglas and Peel's indicate that traditional sayings of a metaphoric nature are not understood by children until they are 12 years of age. As they concluded, this is "information important to educational curriculum planning" (p. 119). This indicates the relatedness between research and education.

On the other hand, psychological studies on traditional sayings, such as Billow (1975), Chambers (1977), Johnson and Malgady (1979), and Resnick (1977), attempt to uncover the constants in metaphorical understanding. They aim at charting a map of cognitive features of association and metaphorical understanding. In Billow, for example, the research tests how metaphors work by questioning the understanding of similarity relationships in proverbial phrases like "Hair is spaghetti," and of proportionality relationships in phrases like "My head is an apple without a core" (p. 415). Billow found that "metaphor comprehension is a type of classificatory behavior" (p. 421) related to cognitive development. Thus, comprehension of similarity sentences like "She has pearly teeth" and "The stars are a thousand eyes" are understood by children between the ages of 7 and 13. However, proportional metaphors, like the proverbs "A stitch in time saves nine" and "Make hay while the sun shines," are understood by those who have reached advanced formal operational development. The main difference between these studies and the former ones on development is that understanding of nonliteral language is seen in terms of a type of behaviour: classification of similarity or proportionality. Development enters as a side issue because of the population which was chosen by Billow. However, these studies are not restricted to children.

Finally, a trend comparable to the one which is found in psychology can be traced in the social sciences, namely in anthropology and in sociology. Just like psychology which researched the cognitive constants of theorizing, the social sciences attempt to uncover the rules which sanction a community of persons thinking and acting together over time. Crocker (1977) explains the tendency in this way:

> The postulation of analogic systems as "codes" whereby the complexities relationship between social entities can be manipulated in terms of paradigmatic entities has served as an impetus to structural analysis in recent social anthropology. (p. 50)

As an example, Goodwin and Wenzel (1979), in an article entitled "Proverbs and practical reasoning: A study in socio-logic," demonstrate that traditional sayings reflect the same principles of logic that are presented in logic textbooks. Proverbs are socially sanctioned knowledge with a code for interpretation (p. 289). A saying like "Two heads are better than one" (p. 298) is seen to legitimate the group authority over the individual. In this manner, traditional sayings make explicit that logic is not ruled only by cognition. Groups and social sanctions legitimate this logic. Structural studies attempt to uncover the paradigm of socio-logic.

La langue orientation in literature

The French structural linguists' influence has also marked literary studies on traditional sayings. In the field of literature, traditional sayings have served as a means to study the aesthetic transformation of sayings into new contexts or into new words in research like that of Moldenhauer (1967), Burke (1950/1969), Abrahams and Babcock (1977). Traditional sayings are of interest to these studies because the sayings stand at the moment of new and original usage of language. They also bring to the foreground the question of oral as compared to written text. The notion of reference becomes crucial. For example:

> While written texts break most ties of discourse to ostensive reference (that is, reference to the situation common to those engaged in an interaction), proverbs carry a typical, if not a specific, ostensive reference onto the page. And because a proverb is strongly indentified with the type of face-to-face scene in which it is commonly found, a carry over of normative meaning occurs despite the dissociation of the verbal meaning of the text and the rhetorical intention. (Abrahams & Babcock, 1977, p. 415)

The proverb "Never believe anything you hear and only half of what you see" may be introduced in a context where hearsay evidence or gossip is to be refuted. This interpretation is carried into the written text. In fact, the proverb discredits words in words and half discredits the seeing of the written page. However, while the saying carries this reference onto the page, it is also self-referencing; it can be interpreted on its own and, by its very structure, establishes itself as different from the text. From this perspective, literary studies of *la langue* orientation see in traditional sayings a genre which may provide a key to the problem of reference "arising

with the development of complex literature" (Abrahams & Babcock, p. 429). The question for study becomes: How does a text become detached from the situation of the writer (speaker)? How can it be resituated vis-à-vis a reader (or listener)? Is the written text more autonomous than the oral text in regards to referencing? These questions indicate a search for the structural grammar which rules oral and written modes. Traditional sayings stand at a crucial point within both modes since they emanate mostly from oral tradition, but can be propagated in writing.

Critique of *la langue* orientation

Studies on traditional sayings which follow *la langue* orientation were found in psychology, anthropology, and literature. They make central the basic identification of traditional sayings and metaphors as figurative language. Although traditional sayings are not necessarily expressed in figurative language, and even the very distinction between literal and figurative language tends to be blurred (Ackerman, 1975), metaphors, like traditional sayings, are related to pedagogy. Etymologically, metaphors refer to transfer, to carrying, *pherein* across or beyond. Ortony (1975, p. 45) indicates that from the earliest writings, metaphors have been used as teaching devices. They carry an essential element of communication: the transference from one to the other. They offer an essential component of education: communication from one to the other. However, it is interesting to note that the above studies seldom mention education and never pedagogy, despite the association made between sayings and pedagogy in history. *La langue* orientation studies have assumed in literature, in psychology, and in anthropology, a perspective of determining the rules which guide behaviour and cognition of humans.

The orientation of *la langue* paroemiologists is profoundly instrumental. The aim is to decipher the nonapparent rules of cognition and social behaviour. In so doing, paroemiologists see a hope eventually to control, or at least to modify human behaviour towards the desired ends. As Douglas and Peel (1979, p. 119) indicated, their research on metaphorical thinking lays the ground work for curriculum planners. What Douglas and Peel are in effect saying is:

when curriculum planners know exactly when children master metaphorical thinking, curricula can be designed to give children the content matter that they can understand and master. This is legitimate, of course, but it exhibits an attitude that learning is the assimilation of a content matter which has been adapted to the level of the student in order to facilitate this assimilation. It is a stimulus-response approach with the added dimension of facilitating adaptation. This approach is within the instrumental realm of the priority of ends-means.

3. Studies since 1940: *la parole* orientation

The second general perspective of studies on traditional sayings attempts to reclaim and map particular visions of the world, personal and social. Studies dwelling in *la parole* orientation in literature, anthropology, and folklore restrict their field of investigation to particular speech acts or events. They favour *la parole* in that it is particular, specific, cultural, or literary contexts that they are studying. However, the influence of structuralism demands that situated studies generate the grammar of usage and culture for that situation.

La parole orientation in language related disciplines

The fields of literature and linguistics have produced two kinds of studies on traditional sayings. The first kind of studies collects sayings found in specific literary works. These studies are akin to the collections of sayings compiled by repertorialists. Many diverse contexts are found. For example, *Proverb Material in the Roman de la Rose* (Larsen, 1978), *The Proverbs in the French Works of Henri Estienne* (McNeal, 1972), *Middle French Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases* (Hassell, 1962), *Proverbs From Four Didactic Works of the Thirteenth Century* (Morgan, 1968), "Proverbs in Carl Sandburg's Poem 'The People, Yes!'" (Mieder, 1973). Long lists of sayings are created. The main concern of these studies is methodological. The question of identifying what was a traditional saying at the time of publication of the literary work chosen for study is of prime importance. Most researchers adopt previous collections of sayings as authorities (Cerquiglini & Cerquiglini, 1976, p. 359). The process of research then becomes one of checking what might be a traditional saying

against these authorities. Other researchers establish a second check by cross-referencing with contemporary works (Zumthor, 1976). Such studies generate repertoires found in literary works.

The second group of studies questions the use and the interpretation of traditional sayings by specific writers; Voltaire (Calvez, 1980), Shakespeare (Cook, 1974), Chrétien de Troyes (Altieri, 1972), Thomas More (Cavanaugh, 1969), are only a few examples of this vast domain of research. A compilation of sayings is a first step in this type of research. It is followed by an analysis of usage and interpretation, for example, *John Donne's Use of Proverbs in His Poetry* (Pitts, 1966), "'What Is't to Leave Betimes?' Proverbs and logic in *Hamlet*" (Klein, 1979), *Proverbs in Health Books in the English Renaissance* (Woodburn, 1975), and *Proverbs, Proverbial Wisdom and Medieval Topoi in the Paston Letters* (Jones, 1971). Although emanating from literature, these latter studies rejoin the orientation preconized by ethnographies and historical analyses. The aim is to establish the mentality of the times and/or the usage that is made of traditional sayings.

La parole orientation in history

In history, it is argued that proverbs can help historians reconstitute particular periods by examining traditional sayings. For example, Alagoa (1973) stated that social and cultural historians in literate societies draw on the literature of the peoples and periods they study for a knowledge of trends and changes of attitudes, ideas, opinions, and customs. It is generally accepted that literary data may be appropriately used for some kinds of historical reconstruction in eighteenth-century events in the Niger Delta (Alagoa, p. 236). However, for Alagoa, traditional sayings are as useful data as literary sources. His study is a reconstitution of events of the Nembe in the Niger Delta by using proverbs as sources of data. The saying "To use in salt exchange at Kula" (p. 241) refers to Kula, a town in the Kalabari state of the Delta, just east of Nembe. The town figures in many sayings relating to war, intermarriage, and trade with the Nembe tribe. As Alagoa interpreted the saying, it suggests that at some period during the long centuries of contact, Nembe obtained salt from Kula,

> apparently by the use of slaves as the object of exchange. The proverb is used to reprimand a person who demands more than his share of helpings at mealtime, since unlimited helpings were permitted only to persons who were to be used in the salt exchange at Kula. This suggests a fattening process. (p. 241)

Then, a saying like "To use in salt exchange at Kula" may tell much about the historical events and practices of a people. As early as 1847, Grattet-Duplessis had voiced the same opinion:

> [Je me suis] occupé depuis plusieurs années de l'étude des proverbes, considérés comme une source abondante et presque inépuisable de documents précieux sur l'histoire intérieure, les moeurs, les croyances, les opinions, les habitudes, sur la langue même des divers peuples chez lesquels ils ont cours. (p. vi)

In history, traditional sayings are then seen as appropriate data for cultural reconstitutions. The orientation of *la parole* paroemiologists in history is identical to that of the next area of research to be attended to presently, anthropology and folklore, with the exception that history must deal with the subject *in absentia*. Anthropology and folklore can use ethnographic procedures.

La parole orientation in anthropology and folklore

In anthropology, folklore, and history, paroemiological research has a considerable overlap. This is because all three disciplines have culture as a guiding notion. Studies on cultures not specifically treated in the previous section and not identified exclusively with history as a discipline will be dealt with in this section. The bulk of paroemiological studies in anthropology and folklore belongs to this section

Folklorists and anthropologists generally study the structure and function of traditional sayings in different cultures or sub-cultures such as that of the Kpelle of Liberia (Kulah, 1973; Murphy, 1976), the Palauans of Micronesia in the Pacific Islands (McKnight, 1970), the Nigerians of Southern Nigeria (Essein, 1978), the Igbo and the Jabo of Liberia (Herzog, 1936; Okezie, 1977), the Haya of Tanzania (Seitel, 1969, 1974), the Akans of Ghana (Egblewoble, 1980), the LSD users of the United States (Bauman, 1970), or the advertising industry (Mieder & Mieder, 1977-1978). Through ethnographic methods of participant observations, informant interviews, informants' interpretations, collection of proverb usage contexts, even

questionnaires, these studies all attempt to discover the rules of proverb usage as derived from its actual usage.

Other studies use a particular language such as Swahili (Parker, 1974), or Arabic (Zenner, 1973). However, the most striking and exceptional study in cultural anthropology is that of Loux and Richard (1978). Their purpose was to contribute to the knowledge of French rural society at the beginning of the twentieth century. More specifically, their analysis of traditional sayings used from the end of the nineteenth century to today leads to a detailed view of the body from the common people's perspective. Their study is entitled *Sagesse du corps: La santé et la maladie dans les proverbes français*. This comprehensive study of the body, its expression of good and bad health, the ethical and moral considerations it fosters, is an extremely complex and meticulous work. For example, they compiled sayings on physionomy and presented the view that sayings give of the body. The face is found to be the expression of the heart: "Le visage est le miroir du coeur" (p. 11). The nose symbolizes moral characteristics: "Nez en l'air, homme généreux," "Nez court, paresseux" (p. 11). Loux and Richard believe that traditional sayings detect hidden relationships between the signs of the world. Sayings are based on "signatures," a vision of relatedness to the world:

> Ce sens n'est pas immédiatement évident: une grosse tête n'est pas synonyme d'intelligence, mais de folie; une constitution faible ne signifie pas que son propriétaire vivra peu. Il faut donc constamment lire les signes de la nature, déceler la parenté des choses entre elles, établir des relations non évidentes, ce à quoi s'emploie le discours proverbial. (p. 225)

The external characteristics, like colour or shape of objects, reveal their hidden values. Loux and Richard have succeeded in getting into the proverbs they are studying. Their rendition is a very sensitive interpretation of the rural French vision of the body and the world.

In general, however, the goal of research on traditional sayings in anthropology and folklore is that of structural functionalism. Such research wishes to generate the structure of proverb usage as it functions in a particular environment. Seitel (1969, 1974) summarizes this goal by emphasizing its two-fold character:

> Show how a study of metaphors about speech [in proverbs] adds to an understanding of indigenous conceptions and evaluations of language use; and show how a group of

metaphors on a single subject forms an interrelated semantic system. (1974, p. 51)

On the one hand, an understanding of usage is sought and on the other, this understanding is to serve as data for explaining the culture, or topics within the culture being studied. For example, Seitel seeks to uncover the usage situations for the saying "A boy who tries to wrestle with his father gets blinded by the old man's loin cloth" (1969, p. 135). First, the question of usage is clarified. The saying, when used to a child is spoken as a warning against disobeying. In no sense is the remark to be taken as an insult. It can also be used by one grown man to another; then, it is clearly aggressive and derisive in tone. Secondly, the usage of the saying can show the generative rules of metaphorical language among the Ibo speaking peoples of Nigeria. Seitel shows that the saying is an example of child-rearing practices and attitudes to education through metaphorical language usage. When the saying is told to a child, it is usually accompanied by a story in order to literalize the metaphor. This invests the saying with proper cultural meanings for the word "child" for example. In the above saying, the meaning of "child" that is learnt by the younger generation, is that children are ignorant of the ways of the world in comparison to adults. Children are dependent on adults (1969, p. 139). Seitel's interpretation is that the saying presents, beyond the usage context, an insight into the social application of metaphor. In so doing, the structure of a culture is generated into a comprehensive picture. Ethnographic paroemiologists take a perspective to their investigations that allows them to search the cultural and social structure of societies through their sayings.

Critique of *la parole* orientation in paroemiology

To see traditional sayings as information for generating an understanding of a particular social structure poses many difficulties: from the bias of the researcher to the danger of describing a society from unrepresentative sayings or to the very possibility of structural description of a society. These difficulties are, by no means, a problem exclusive of paroemiological studies within anthropology or folklore. However, it is important to underline at this point how the very recognition of context is at odds with the structural aim of these studies.

One issue at stake in *la parole* orientation, particularly in historical, anthropological, and folklore ethnographies, is that in attempting to generate the social structure of groups, the interpretation of the analyst may "interfere" with the mapping. While investigating *la parole*, the danger becomes that the bias of the ethnographer may substitute an individualistic, situational element for an essential trait of the culture.

A further objection is that the sayings may be unrepresentative of the culture in which they are investigated. Sayings have originated in the past and using them to make statements about the present (or a particular culture) may lead to obvious erroneous conclusions:

> But even the most expressive identification is eminently situation bound, to the extent that it is difficult to find anyone, or even a logically integrated set of them, that is consistently employed through all social contexts to express (and persuade) what "we" might be. The analyst, however, may find it convenient to forget this, and to focus instead on some central trope, or series of "key metaphors" that are either indigenous or imported for the occasion, and that can be offered up as constituting themselves a summary of "total truth" for the society he is investigating. (Crocker, 1977, p. 65)

As in Seiltel's study (1969), sayings run the risk of being used for hasty conclusions. If the Ibo view children as dependent in the sayings "A baby does not know that the road is long," or "A boy who tries to wrestle with his father gets blinded by the old man's loin cloth," can the conclusion be drawn that the Ibo view their children as dependent in general social interaction? To transfer the sayings from their particular meanings to a representation of social interaction is at times unrepresentative. Finally, the question of whether a structural description can ever be possible is crucial. Is a description, devoid of its situatedness, as Crocker puts it, ever a "total truth"? In this light, the very goal of structural studies may be impossible to achieve.

In conclusion, traditional sayings within *la parole* orientation of paroemiological studies recognize the embeddedness and inseparability of sayings from the situational context. *La langue* orientation of studies also spoke to the equally difficult task of generating the human grammar that allows for the situational event. Both approaches, by their drawbacks, suggest that a study perspective of traditional sayings should profoundly take into account the situatedness of traditional language. It will be suggested in chapter three that hermeneutics can offer a perspective that takes into account the situatedness of sayings, both as point of

departure, and as goal. Structural studies may take situatedness as a point of departure, but situatedness is not the goal; abstract systems of explanations are sought.

4. Traditional sayings used as tools in research

Sayings as tools in psychology

The above research related directly to the nature of traditional sayings. However, in psychology and education, the trend has been to use sayings as instruments for testing or teaching. We are distinguishing here between research about sayings and research using traditional sayings in professional activities. Such usage is frequent in experimental and clinical psychology. Mieder (1978) states that "proverbs have been utilized for different types of psychological testing for quite some time" (p. 45). In Germany in 1906, J. Finckh devised a proverb test for the study of intelligence. Familiarity with proverbs is deemed to be their major asset. It is assumed that intelligence varies proportionally with the ability to abstract the meaning of proverbs. Hence, a 1956 report of the Gorham's *Proverb Test* included the following item:

22. A rolling stone gathers no moss.
a) be consistent.
b) The moss gets brushed off.
c) If you don't settle down you won't accomplish much.
d) A person who thinks no evil does no evil.

Alternative c) is deemed correct and the test is designed to measure abstract thinking.

Proverb tests were also used for the detection of schizophrenia. Proverbs were chosen for Benjamin's test since "many schizophrenics have great difficulty in giving the meaning of a proverb correctly" (Benjamin, 1944/1964, p. 73). Schizophrenics, it is believed, tend to give more concrete and literal meanings to the proverbs; they are less capable of abstracting than so-called normal people.

Finally, proverb tests are used in psychology to obtain information about personality traits and attitudes. To agree with the saying "To forgive an enemy is a sign of weakness" is interpreted as a sign of aggression while agreement with "Never trust a flatterer" is seen as the

expression of an attitude of rejection (Mieder, 1978, p. 50). The difficulty with the use of sayings in clinical and experimental psychology is that, in every instance, a saying is likely to have many correct interpretations. To assume that "To forgive an enemy is a sign of weakness" can tell about the aggressive personality of a person is to restrict the field of interpretation to a narrow domain. The above saying can be a cultural trait, quite accepted normally in a certain culture, and its utilization may be a matter of habit rather than a personality trait. Mieder has argued that the use of sayings in psychology is oblivious of research in folklore. While attending to psychological concepts, psychology is unaware, in practice at least, that proverbs are ambiguous, are not context free, and that they are culturally bound (Mieder, 1978). The use of sayings in psychology is impaired by tunnel vision from a desire to apply psychological concepts without an in-depth knowledge of the nature of the instrument used, the sayings.

Traditional sayings as tools in education

When traditional sayings are discussed in the context of education, it is primarily in language education research. At the published rate of approximately one article a year since 1960, they recapitulate the perspective of collection oriented repertorialists; through lists of sayings, certain educational objectives can be met.

> Proverbs, then, had a very important educational function in the past, and I believe that they can still be useful in the composition classroom today. In the remainder of this paper, I would like to explore a few of those uses. (D'Angelo, 1977, p. 367)

D'Angelo's article, like many others, proposes ways of using proverbs primarily in the context of language skill building. Activities suggested for language skill building vary from filling in the blanks (Hunt, 1974), to story interpretation (Curran, 1971, 1974; Smith, 1972), to pictorial description (Graziano & Irving, 1980). Proverbs are examples of figurative techniques such as alliteration, metaphor, simile, ellipsis, parallelism, antithesis, and puns (D'Angelo). They are also seen as a point of departure for reflection and writing. D'Angelo suggests three classical exercises: 1) obtaining innumerable ideas through thematically arranged sayings, on love, for example; 2) oral exercises in the form of dialogue, for example, "Question: What is it that will

overcome all things? Answer: Love"; 3) learning to paraphrase, for example: "People who talk the most are often the most ignorant." D'Angelo concluded with a statement which, in spite of itself, is reflective of a belief in the marginality and nonseriousness of traditional sayings in education today:

> In this day and age, in which many of our educational endeavours may be characterized as "value-free," *we could do worse* than revitalize an important part of the Western liberal-education tradition. Like other forms of rhetoric, proverbs may be used as "*impersonal vehicules*" for communication. (1980, p. 369, emphasis added)

He bases his argument on what could be seen as the lesser of two evils: to be "value-free" or "value-laden." He implicitly recognizes the cultural embeddedness of sayings and ratifies it by, in turn, valuing what he calls an "impersonal" language. Underlying these assumptions is the notion that teaching a language is the teaching of a right code or grammar (*la langue*). How *la parole* is joined to *la langue*, in composition writing for example, is not dealt as an issue by any educational enthusiast of traditional sayings.

In the second language research, traditional sayings, are often introduced within an instrumental approach (Raymond, 1948; Nuessel, 1982). Proverbs are seen as examples of phonetic, grammatical, vocabulary, and cultural acquisition:

> *Refranes* [proverbs] are concise, easily remembered, highly interesting and versatile instructional aids in the Spanish curriculum. Because they facilitate oral practice, exemplify many grammatical constructions, build vocabulary, and contrast cultural values and differences, these extremely economical instructional aids deserve appropriate incorporation into the classroom schedule. (Nuessel, 1982, p. 89)

Within instrumentality of approach in second languages, two issues become prevalent. The first issue concerns the content to be taught with proverbs. Exact identification of phonological, grammatical, lexical, and cultural elements is endeavoured. Secondly, the elaboration of selection criteria for traditional sayings is found in all four articles discovered on the subject (Raymond, 1948, 1949; McKenna, 1974; Nuessel, 1982). Such criteria are a necessary step in the selection of sayings which will lead to the desired acquisition. The list of criteria varies according to the author, but the orientation remains the same.

However, the cultural embeddedness of sayings is taken seriously by McKenna (1974) who sees the second language context as one in which lessons of universality can be gained.

Sayings, he says, bring humanity together despite the particular cultural formations that they represent:

> The proverb, although in French, need not be of French origin. Indeed, it can often be useful to give the text of a proverb in its original language, with the French translation (and possibly with a French equivalent not a translation); one might also give an intermediate form, as Latin for Greek proverbs. This can be intellectually stimulating and flattering to the common cultural heritage of humanity and possibly draw comparisons; it may also help elucidate the meaning of the proverb and propose a polyglot ideal. (p. 385-386)

Although he proposes proverbs for inclusion in effective teaching methodologies, McKenna's article further reflects an interest in intellectual stimulation and in the offering of opportunities. Such language proposes sayings as having a pedagogical quality beyond the acquisition of identified language components such as phonology, grammar, lexicon, or culture as facts.

In education, then, the literature on traditional sayings indicates a meagre interest in traditional sayings. How is such an oversight possible when history tells us that they have always been seen as didactic and instructive? In addition to the many questions raised in the review of the literature, a brief parallel will now be drawn between curriculum and traditional sayings in order to indicate that traditional sayings, at a historical moment, have been replaced by the notion of curriculum.

Traditional sayings and curriculum

Contemporary concerns with curriculum have replaced and reformulated traditional sayings. Before the twentieth century, traditional sayings were seen as part of instruction. Today, they are seen as marginal, if not mostly apart from it. They are now viewed as entertaining enrichment, but do not constitute an integral, fundamental part of instruction and curriculum. Yet, curriculum, in its form as a planned programme for teaching, can be seen as a kind of saying that is traditional. Curriculum tenders already acquired knowledge by the contemporary way of seeing the world and proffers this knowledge into language, as a saying does. Traditional sayings in education have been replaced by their newly articulated reformulation: curriculum. Traditional sayings are seen as marginal, but curriculum now

stands for traditional sayings, as metaphors do. The changing of terms, as shedding a skin, is a witness of the changing of perspectives: from the world of traditional sayings to the world of racing to objectives as in *currere*, meaning to run.

Curriculum, its development, and its implementation, the many theories and the many controversies surrounding this new field are the tip of an iceberg which referees traditional and modern knowledge. The awareness, brought to words by the emergence of the curriculum field, points to a *décalage* between modern, new knowledge to be acquired by students through effective use of curriculum (as knowledge to be offered), and traditional knowledge originating from another time and place. New curriculum has to be designed, and implemented. The pace with which curriculum is cycled and recycled counters the stability of traditional sayings. However, while the knowledge base seems different, the new knowledge offered may be similar to the old one. The knowledge proposed, as planned in curriculum, offers the new insights of modern sciences, yet, it remains to be questioned if the moral, ethical, human values embedded within them are so different. To bring back traditional sayings as reflection on curriculum is an effort to contrast and compare today's view of knowledge to be offered with the old, traditional knowledge. Perhaps we have come to a profound sense of the inadequacy of curriculum and instruction as pedagogy. Efforts have been made to enlarge the vision of curriculum, but, in order to go on, we must first return to the experience of pedagogy.

5. Conclusion on paroemiological studies

Throughout history, traditional sayings have been surrounded by a didactic, instructive power that was commonly acknowledged. However, paroemiology has, in general, been inattentive to this fact. Instead, a critical recapitulation of the studies borrowing on the one hand from psychology, sociology, anthropology, history, literary criticism, and folklore offers a structural orientation that attempts to generate systems of explications on theorizing or socializing. When the dominant perspective, structuralism, is probed critically in order to question its basic assumptions, it is found that the situational, contextual dimension of sayings

is a hurdle. Efforts are nevertheless constantly made to by-pass, or sur-pass, the situatedness that is seen as a drawback. On the other hand, education and psychology use traditional sayings instrumentally without attempting to question their pedagogical importance.

It is proposed that traditional sayings must be studied from a perspective that will take into account as essential, the hurdle of situatedness. Hermeneutics, in attempting to understand the felt dimension of traditional sayings, is seen as more responsive to the exigencies of the topic at hand, and the hurdle becomes the promise.

E. Conclusions drawn from the review of traditional sayings in history and research

A detailed and comprehensive review of the literature has been presented on three levels: the attitudes adopted towards traditional sayings in history, the orientation fostered by collectors of sayings, and the perspectives presented by studies on traditional sayings. Four conclusions can be drawn.

First, research is inattentive to the commonplace association between traditional sayings and education, pedagogy, teaching, learning, and didactics. The social transmission of knowledge is, however, a pervasive source of comments.

Secondly, six problem areas have been identified within research: censorship, identification of the origin of sayings, completeness of collections, association within the learned-popular debate of values, reference to the oral-written cultural mode, and finally, the antinomy between structural conclusions and situatedness of sayings. Some problems are inherent to the orientation of the researchers, such as censorship, others derive from the object of study, such as situatedness. These problem areas in themselves are important enough to suggest that new perspectives must be adopted in order to study the topic of traditional sayings

Thirdly, the literature identifies a predominantly functional structuralist approach to the study of sayings. Through a realisation of the importance of situatedness, the usage context has become predominant. Hence, research asks what function a saying serves in particular situations. Without denying the value of such an approach, it must be pointed out

how contradictory the endeavour is. Function is a particular perspective on a context; it follows the goal-strategy-end model. This notion restricts considerably the context under study. Furthermore, when function is presented into a theoretical guide of social or psychological law-like statements, sayings are no longer situated. As such, we are no longer aware of actual usage. Hence, the articulation of traditional sayings through function as essence into structures and theories is unresponsive to the way they are lived.

Fourthly, and finally, the research surveyed can now serve as a point of introduction for a new approach. The purpose of a comprehensive report was to form a springboard which will serve to explain why a hermeneutic study should be attempted. The interest in the research presented is that it lies at the root of new interpretations, now made possible. Chapter three, by elaborating the methodological stance, will articulate how this is possible.

III. Considerations of method

A. Introduction

Etymologically, the word "method" refers to the Greek *methodos* with *meta*, after, and *hodos*, a travelling, as composite elements. Originally, the notion of method acknowledges the importance of hindsight. *Methodos* was an itinerary made after the trip, the recipe written after the culinary exploration, the battle strategies identified after the victory. The original meaning was related to a pursuit, a little like a throwing forward without more definite plans than an end and a vague view of the road.

Today, the hindsight of many generations and of disciplined inquiry is available at a glance. Many roads have been travelled and mapped with great precision. *Methodos* became methodology, the science of methods and procedures. We have, however, forgotten a certain sense of exploration where the method is the travelling. It is this sense that I wish to give to method: its original Greek meaning. It is so for two reasons: first, because of a malaise in paroemiological studies and, second, because the method chosen, hermeneutics, is itself, through understanding, a nonmethodic moment of interpretation. We now ask: What makes it so difficult to understand how it is that we can say that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice?

This section on considerations of method gives an initial definition to the term of study: traditional sayings. Then, it will introduce the method, the *methodos*, in this case, through a brief review of the hermeneutical tradition, through the notions of interpretation as a dialectic between explanation and understanding, and through a review of paroemiological research in the light of hermeneutics. Finally, the *methodos* programme will articulate the notion of understanding to be used and will provide four value positions that will serve as orientations to the study.

B. An initial definition of the term "traditional sayings"

In a dissertation, it is traditional to define the terms of usage and primarily, in this case, the words "traditional sayings." Efforts in defining the terms have led many (Maloux, 1960; Taylor, 1962; Wilson, 1970; Meschonnic, 1976) to despair as to the feasibility of the task:

> The proverb telling what a proverb is cannot be discovered and men who have worked for years on the subject have hardly bettered the dictionary definition [...] (that is) a short, pithy saying in common recognized use. Titley could find no satisfactory definition, nor could he distinguish between proverbs, proverbial phrases, and proverbial similes; he resorted to reliance on our ancestor's understanding and an acceptance of what they included in their collections. (Wilson, 1970, p. vii)

Attempts at defining traditional sayings were efforts to bring to words an experience with language, tradition, pedagogy, and knowledge. Couched in nonexperiential terminology, definitions allow the structural elements to be focused on: the sentence style (imperative, passive), the language (methaphorical, literal), the domain of exhortation (moral, practical), and the purpose (prescriptive, instructive). The categorizing and labelling of definitions presents the rational facts while ignoring the inner experience (Meschonnic, 1976, p. 426). DesRuisseaux, in his introduction to *Le Livre des proverbes québécois*, links the inability to define proverbs and maxims to the *décalage* between the living of sayings and the nature of definitions. The language of definitions cannot do justice to the lived and felt experience:

> Si plusieurs définitions du proverbe et de la maxime ont été mises de l'avant par plusieurs auteurs, aucune ne semble rendre compte adéquatement de ces deux types de discours particuliers.
>
> On *ressent* avant tout les "dires" et même si on pouvait en exprimer toutes les constantes stylistiques, rhétoriques, sémantiques, psychanalytiques, on resterait, certes, bien en deçà de leur contenu affectif, de ce qu'ils représentent concrètement dans la vie de tous les jours. Si "on peut déterminer la véritable signification d'un terme en observant ce qu'un homme fait avec, non pas ce qu'il en dit" (Bridgeman, *The Logic of Modern Physics*), toute définition du proverbe et de la maxime nous ramène finalement à l'usage qu'on en fait dans la vie courante. (DesRuisseaux, 1978, pp. 12-13)

The difficulty with defining traditional sayings rejoins the greater issue of "defining" experiences of everyday life. Without attempting to solve the issue, this study begins with external delimitations and definitions. These will not, however, be seen as a *de-finire*: of the end, of the limit. Let "end" stand for the moment of inauguration as the end of construction of a ship becomes the beginning of its journey. A definition is, in this context, an obscure

beginning, one that allows a temporary focus.

Among the many forms of traditional sayings are maxims, proverbs, truisms, adages, dictums, apothegms, precepts, mottoes, aphorisms, and saws. Although common in our vocabulary, these distinctions are rarely thought of as variations of a common phenomenon. They are treated individually (or never at all) or are pooled under the heading of proverbs (Loux & Richard, 1978, p. 230). What follows, condensed from dictionaries and studies on the topic, serves as a preliminary indication of distinctions:

a) **Maxim/maxime**: a brief rational or philosophical statement of a practical principle or proposition, usually nonmetaphorical. Etymologically, from *magnus*, of great authority, the greatest premise.

Examples: "Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connait point."

"Everything comes to him who waits."

"Take care of thy shop and they shop will take care of thee."

(Maloux, 1960; Funk & Wagnalls, 1966; Barley, 1972; Robert, 1977; Whiting, 1977; Roberts, 1984)

b) **Proverb/proverbe**: a truth from experience condensed as "a gem of wisdom," often metaphorical. Etymologically, it refers to its experiential, prereflexive origin: *pro*, before, and *verbium*, a word.

Examples: "On ne fait pas d'omelette sans casser d'oeufs."

"All's well that ends well."

(Taylor & Whiting, 1958; Maloux, 1960; Funk & Wagnalls, 1966)

c) **Aphorism/aphorisme**: a summary of general truth, a formula or prescription summarizing a moral or scientific truth. Etymologically, linked to definition through the Greek *aphorismos* (definition).

Examples: "Tel père, tel fils."

"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder."

(Taylor & Whiting, 1958; Maloux, 1960; Funk & Wagnalls, 1966)

d) **Apothegm/apophtegme**: a sententious maxim, a terse instructive and practical saying. It is the word of an illustrious person. From the Greek *apo*, from, and *phtemgesthai*, speak, utter. It is then, the word that is solemnly uttered.

Examples: "On se cache d'être brave comme d'aimer."

"One should keep old roads and old friends."

(Taylor, 1962; Robert, 1977; Picoche, 1979)

e) **Dictum/dicton**: an authoritative, dogmatic, or positive utterance. A pronouncement, often linked to a person or school on whom its authority depends (English only). Etymologically closer to the act of saying, *dicere*, to say.

Example: "Année neigeuse, année fructueuse."

(Funk & Wagnalls, 1966; Robert, 1977)

f) **Precept/précepte**: a command or rule of behaviour. It directs action before it takes place and gives instruction or direction. From the Latin *praecipere*, to teach (*prae*, before, and *capere*, receive, take).

Examples: "Aimez-vous les uns les autres."

"Comparisons are odious."

"Do as I say, not as I do."

(Hazlitt, 1907/1969; Funk & Wagnalls, 1966; Wilson, 1970; Robert, 1977)

g) **Motto/devise**: akin to the French *mot*, it is an expressive word or pithy sentence enunciating the goals or ideals of a nation, group, etc. Prefixed to a literary composition as somehow indicative of its qualities, the emphasis is on its form as well as its meaning.

Examples: "Honni soit qui mal y pense."

"*A mari usque ad mare*."

(Maloux, 1960; Funk & Wagnalls, 1966; Coles, 1979)

h) **Byword**: a saying used reproachfully or contemptuously to a person (object) that has become an object of derision or mockery. It is judgmental.

(Funk & Wagnalls, 1966)

i) **Axiom/axiome**: a self-evident, universally recognized truth. Its worth dimension is evident in its roots: *axios*, worthy. The French term further suggests an hypothetical statement.

Example: "Le tout est plus grand que la partie."

(Littré, 1871/1976; Robert, 1977)

j) **Adage**: a saying giving a homely truth or moral action. It has obtained credit or force by long usage. From the Latin *ad agendum*, what must be done.

Examples: "La plume est serve, la parole est libre."

"Nine taylors make a man."

(Hazlitt, 1907/1969; Maloux, 1960; Funk & Wagnalls, 1966; Robert, 1977)

k) **Sentence**: thought, mostly of moral importance, expressed in a dogmatic and literary fashion.

Examples: "Un service vaut ce qu'il coûte."

"Fie upon hens, quoth the fox, when he could not reach them."

"A swallow makes no summer."

(Hazlitt, 1907/1969; Maloux, 1960; Robert, 1977; Whiting, 1977)

Although other forms of traditional sayings are sometimes referred to, the above give sufficient examples of commonalities within variations of genre to provide an initial focus. Dwelling in commonalities of forms, traditional sayings are brief statements. They are distinguishable from fables and parables by their length. They are presented in a fixed form, a characteristic which anticipates their ideological content; expressions gain social acceptance and are transmitted in the same form. They reflect usage as authority and/or by authority and address what is seen as a dimension of truth. This truth is often particular, prescriptive, of an "ought to be" or "ought to do" nature; traditional sayings give direction to thought and action. They also reflect a particular (cultural) mode of seeing the world, and they are witnesses of the history that shaped the cultural world. Recurring through these commonalities are four

themes: tradition as authority, knowledge as truth, pedagogy as direction, and language as medium.

Other genres of expression also display affinities to traditional sayings: epitaphs, book inscriptions, blazons, autograph albums, graffiti, latrinalia, restaurant and commercial signs, slogans in advertisements, pins, T-shirts, and bumper-stickers. They are all concise, apparently wise, and prescriptive in intent. They only lack the seal of time. Some may survive: that is, be more than ephemeral. However, in their transitoriness, ephemeral sayings offer a contrast to traditional sayings and allow a glimpse at the very making of traditional sayings.

The six commonalities above cannot be seen collectively as conclusive elements for expressing the essence of sayings; they do not speak to the intuitive knowledge we have that particular sayings are traditional, nor do they reflect on the (quasi) universality of the phenomenon, an element that many paroemiologists have noted (Rodegem, 1972, p. 680).

> *On ne saurait expliquer* ni la faveur universelle accordée aux locutions proverbiales ni leur distribution dans la quasi-totalité du monde, presque indépendamment des époques, des continents, des niveaux de développement techniques ou économiques, des langues ou des cultures. (Maloux, 1960, p. v, emphasis added)

Consequently, it is recognized that the following definition, taking into account the six commonalities identified above, is unsatisfactory: Traditional sayings are brief statements expressed in a fixed form. They reflect authority, tell a truth, or give a prescriptive comment while presenting a particular mode of seeing the world. This definition speaks of the structure, usage, and content value of sayings. It is unsatisfactory since the words explain the phenomenon but do not foster an understanding of it. However, let the definition stand as a point of departure.

The use of a definition of traditional sayings as a starting point, without attempting further operationalization of the topic at hand, collapses the distinctions among genres of sayings. This is done because our interest points to the phenomenon beyond its genre distinctions: that is, beyond its appearance as a proverb, a maxim, or a precept. Furthermore, paroemiology has superficially dealt with the issue:

> Ce sont là quelques exemples de la littérature dite gnomique, proverbiale, et, du fait que proverbe, sentence, maxime, etc., ne se définissent pas comme des figures géométriques, l'usage littéraire, oubliant la propriété des termes, n'est pas sans les employer indistinctement. (Maloux, 1960, p. viii)

Consequently, traditional sayings will hereafter stand for the phenomenon of speaking through the voice of tradition, a voice which takes the form of brief, fixed sayings. Despite difficulties of definitions, a general focus and six elements of commonalities were given. Distinctions of genre indicate efforts of comparisons and contrasts. Various situational and pedagogical contexts are expressed in each: moral prescribing (aphorism), commanding (precept), reproaching (byword), offering of a norm (proverb), exhorting to action (adage), all with the force of tradition. But, how the following are defined as to their genre is of lesser importance than their occurrence as a phenomenon:

"By hook or by crook." (Forster, 1980, p. 4)

"All's well that ends well." (Forster, p. 4)

"An apple a day keeps the doctor away." (Forster, p. 4)

"To light a lamp for a blind person is waste of lamp-oil." (Scheven, 1981, p. 219)

"Remorse is having a grand-child, it comes at the end." (Scheven, p. 219)

Be they adages, proverbs, or precepts, it is in the occurrence that the phenomenon will be questioned. Instead, genre distinctions might be referred to their situation. Genres will be analyzed separately only when the distinction is of importance as, for instance, in the proverb and the maxim.

Just as definitions propose an objectified phenomenon, the discipline of paroemiology has followed an objectifying orientation to the phenomenon it studies. As seen in the previous chapter, repertorialists gather and collect traditional sayings. They wish to form a repertoire of words as others gather rocks, stamps, or coins. The disciplines which have taken the repertoires for study within their periphery (psychology, sociology, anthropology, history) have also adopted an objectifying stance through the dominance of structuralism. Yet, traditional sayings have been seen and lived throughout history within a pedagogic, instructive

guise, not as objects exterior to one's life. New perspectives must be adopted, perspectives which take definitions as starting points, reverse the objectifying process to experience, and bring paroemiology to life. The next section will delimit a methodology that will attempt to reconcile research and experience in a manner that furthers the use of definitions as starting points.

C. Methodology of the study

1. Introduction: the hermeneutical tradition

When understanding is the main topic of study, the natural recourse is to turn to hermeneutics. The difficulty of understanding how we can say that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice, leads us to seek a method that deepens understanding. The choice of method for a study of traditional sayings was guided by what were seen as difficulties and inherent contradictions in paroemiological research. These considerations have led to the adoption of hermeneutics and, more precisely, of hermeneutics as proposed by Paul Ricoeur as a proper methodology that restores understanding to its primary status.

Modern hermeneutics has a long history of interpretive contexts and goals from Schleiermacher and Dilthey to Heidegger and Gadamer. It revolves around the notion of interpretation. First, as Ricoeur introduces the question in "The task of hermeneutics" (1973), interpretation is necessitated by polysemy, a phenomenon of natural languages that refers to the capacity that words have of meaning more than one thing. Hermeneutics, from the Greek *hermeneutikos*, to interpret or to gain understanding, relates to the explaining of ambiguous or unclear language. Polysemy means a text can be submitted to many interpretations. For many centuries hermeneutics was a subdiscipline of philology (Bauman, 1978, p. 7). The aim of this branch of philology was to recover the authentic, original version of a text, primarily Christian texts.

In the nineteenth century Schleiermacher became interested in the interpretation of Holy Scriptures (exegesis) and of Greek or Latin texts, but his goal, in response to positivism, was to raise hermeneutics to a technology. In this, Schleiermacher, as the acclaimed father of hermeneutics, answered to a dual tradition (Bauman, p. 26). On the one hand, romanticism appealed "to the spirit of unconscious creator at work in individual geniuses," while on the other hand, critical philosophy in the Kantian tradition wished to "elaborate the universally applicable rules of understanding" (Ricoeur, 1973, p. 115). In Schleiermacher's system, one type of interpretation, from Romanticism leading to psychologism, excluded the other; the grammatical interpretation was concerned with the characteristics of discourse that were common to a culture.

With Dilthey (1961), historical consciousness had come to the foreground. He distinguished between the physical and the psychical worlds. Explanation of nature was based on the unknowable essence of the physical things. No empathy was seen as possible. Understanding, however, contained hermeneutics within itself. Based on the primordial capacity to place oneself in the psychical life of others (empathy) as an essential feature of the human sciences, hermeneutics complemented empathy by interpreting the objectified layer of historical knowledge (in history, for example). In this manner, Dilthey, endeavoured to endow the cultural sciences with an epistemology and a methodology just as respectable as those belonging to the natural sciences. In so doing, he separated the notions of explanation and understanding and placed hermeneutics as the interpretive science of understanding.

With Heidegger (1977) and Gadamer (1975), hermeneutics became ontological rather than epistemological. For Heidegger, hermeneutics became the explanation of ontological grounds on which the science of spirit, epistemology, could be built. The notion of understanding is henceforth situated in Being, and Heidegger's hermeneutics introduces the notion of preunderstanding as orienting us in a situation. Preunderstanding is a fundamental participation and a prereflective intimacy we have with the world. Interpretation, then, becomes the explication of this existential moment, but it only gives an expression to the term

"as," it is only a showing, a manifestation of the preunderstanding. Similarly, understanding becomes the unfolding of the possibilities of Being that are indicated in an objectification such as a text. Thus, Heidegger eliminated Dilthey's dichotomy of understanding versus explanation by subordinating epistemology to ontology.

With Gadamer in *Truth and Method* (1975), the question of the human sciences is again raised by means of the Heideggerian ontology. The debate lies between the alienation of distanciation and the experience of participation. Through aesthetics, tradition, and language, Gadamer proves a single thesis: that the cobelonging to the world precedes and makes possible every scientific treatment of language, tradition, or art. Cobelonging also precedes every claim to dominate the structure of the text by objective techniques. To Heidegger, Gadamer added an historical dimension, but he agrees with Heidegger that interpretation must be made a derivative mode of fundamental understanding (p. 359). Hence, explanation is subjugated to understanding. It is from this context that Ricoeur (1973) sets out to argue the dialectical relation between explanation and understanding.

2. Interpretation as a dialectic between explanation and understanding

With Paul Ricoeur, the notion of interpretation, which had been relegated to understanding, regains a neutrality that situates it between explanation and understanding. Interpretation is the task of hermeneutics. This task results from a dialectic between participation and distanciation, understanding and explanation.

In the midst of the old methodological debate, Ricoeur attempts to reunite the objectivity of the natural sciences and the subjectivity of the human sciences by restating them in terms of a dialectic between participation and distanciation.

The notion of dialectic according to Ricoeur

First, by "dialectic" Ricoeur means:

> The view that explanation and understanding would not constitute mutually exclusive poles, but rather relative moments in a complex process called interpretation. This alternative solution also has epistemological and ontological dimensions.

> Epistemological dimension: If there is a relation of mutual implication between the methods, we should find between the natural and the social sciences a continuity as well as a discontinuity, a family resemblance as well as a particularity in their methods. Ontological dimension: If explanation and understanding are inextricably bound together on the epistemological level, it is no longer possible to make an ontological dualism correspond to a methodological dualism. (1978, p. 150)

In order to negate oppositions, Ricoeur substitutes what he calls a "refined dialectic," one articulated on many levels and with consequences in epistemology and ontology. In ontology, he no longer sees distanciation as a separate mode of being from participation. They are, rather, complementary ontological moments of Being: one is necessary to the other. In epistemology, explanation and understanding answer to two methodological moments, each grounded on the other.

The notions of explanation and understanding according to Ricoeur

For Ricoeur, understanding has two moments mediated by explanation. Understanding refers to the fundamental belonging to the world that we experience prereflectively. With this notion, he is heir to the phenomenology of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Gadamer. It is a spontaneous, intimate "pre-understanding" that gives "immediate apprehension of the intentions of others" in a dialogue situation, for example. More generally, it is "the apprehension, at a level other than scientific, of our belonging to the whole of what is" (Ricoeur, 1978, p. 165). This first movement of understanding is faithful to the etymology of the word: from the Latin, *comprehendere*, seizing, grasping together. There is a syncretic sense of being in the world to this notion of understanding as belonging. Explanation comes as a necessary distanciation from this fundamental belonging.

Distanciation, for Ricoeur, is also a condition for interpretation. In "The hermeneutical function of distanciation" (1973) he argues for the positive and productive function of distanciation "at the heart of the historicity of human experience" (p. 130). Distanciation is contained in participation. For example, on Gadamer's philosophy of language, of linguisticality as universal, Ricoeur states in "The task of hermeneutics":

> My participation in a tradition or traditions passes through the interpretation of signs, works and texts, in which cultural heritages are inscribed and offered for our

deciphering. (1973, p. 128)

Hence, mediation through languages becomes a contact between personal life and cultural objects. Participation in the world is a contact with distant objects and people.

Distanciation is expressed through explanation. Grounded in preunderstanding, explanation essentially confirms its etymology: *ex-planare*, to flatten out, to make level. Explanation, first, abstracts particular situations and levels them to a unidimensional statement that leaves behind the particulars. This abstraction has an autonomy with regards to the author's (actor's) intention and the receiver's world. The originality of author and audience is levelled to a depersonalized initiator or audience. It is not a particular person acting or receiving but *any* person. This decontextualization is seen as objectivity. It is the very possibility for scientific rigor where every subjective and inter-subjective relation is eliminated.

Secondly, explanation creates its own reference system. It does this by necessity, having broken the ostensive reference to the world that participation fosters. It is no longer able to point, beyond words, to existence and presence. Hence, the language of explanation becomes a closed system pointing to itself for reference. It has closed off part of the world and becomes its own totality, outside of human author or audience.

Thirdly, explanations strip the situations of actuality and reduce them to the state "of a variable in a system which has no other existence than that of an unified ensemble of permissions and prohibitions" (1978, p. 165). By this, Ricoeur indicates that explanation is done by recourse to general laws that have various levels of generality and of regularity. Explanations become an attempt at reference outside of time and place where statements hold for every possible time and place. An explanation fits into a system of explanations and gains the status of a law.

Explanation, following preunderstanding is, according to Ricoeur, the methodic "moment of interpretation." It is, in turn, followed by understanding. The three characteristics of explanation, autonomy, a closed reference system, and generalizability, are enveloped by understanding. The dialectic is reintroduced:

> On the epistemological level, I say there are not two methods, the explanatory method and the method of understanding. Strictly speaking, only explanation is *methodic*. Understanding is rather the nonmethodic moment which, in the sciences of interpretation, comes together with the methodic moment of explanation. Understanding *precedes, accompanies, closes, and thus envelops explanation*. In return, explanation *develops* understanding analytically. This dialectical bond between explanation and understanding has as a consequence a very complex and paradoxical relation between the social sciences and the natural sciences. (1978, p. 165, emphasis added)

But what is understanding in this case?

Ricoeur situates understanding within ontology as did Heidegger and Gadamer, but he is faithful to the importance he assigns to distanciation:

> If the word *understanding* has such a density it is because, at the same time, it designates the *nonmethodic* pole, dialectically opposed to the pole of explanation in every interpretive science, *and* it designates the indicator, no longer methodological but verifying, of the *ontological relation of belonging of our being to beings and to Being*. The rich ambiguity of the word *understanding* is that it designates a moment in the theory of method, the one we call the nonmethodic pole, and the *apprehension, at a level other than scientific, of our belonging to the whole of what is*. (1978, p. 165, emphasis added)

Ricoeur indicates in the above that preunderstanding precedes explanation, but he also points to the second movement of understanding, the "apprehension of our belonging to the whole of what is." In "The hermeneutical function of distanciation," he states: "Actually, what is to be interpreted in a text is a proposed world, a world that I might inhabit and wherein I might project my own most possibilities" (p. 140). Understanding becomes the link between I, the reader or receiver, and the world unfolded by the text. It partly restores participation with the world by resituating interpretation within the person. Understanding is also faithful to distanciation by identifying a world ap-presented, outside the person. Understanding is a resituating of explanation by the presentation of an abstract, autonomous, and closed system of reference within a whole world, a world that keeps its own author, audience, and ostensive reference.

Paul Ricoeur has shifted the debate between the natural sciences and the human sciences in such a way as to provide for both, along with their traditional methodologies, an important place in the living of knowledge. He brings epistemology and ontology together. It

is one of the reasons that he was chosen as a methological base for a study of traditional sayings. The detailed analysis of paroemiological research presented in the previous chapter will now be situated within Ricoeur's hermeneutics.

3. Paremiological research and hermeneutics

The present section is articulated in two parts. First, the features of the research body will be identified, and secondly, the problems of paroemiological research will be reviewed. Pareomiological research is generally, since 1940, an attempt at explaining traditional sayings. It follows the three characteristics of explanation: autonomy, a closed system of reference, and abstraction.

Paroemiological research aims at establishing an autonomous system of explanations by shifting situations to abstractions. Research, particularly within *la parole* orientation, begins in concrete situations. Its methodologies are a witness to this: ethnography as informant interviews, participant observations (Arewa & Dundes, 1964), group administered questionnaires (Kemper, 1978), stylistic and contextual analyses of representative sayings in the Old Testament (Fontaine, 1979), analyses of usage context for proverbs (Calvez, 1980). The context of usage is the point of departure of *la parole* research. This research is grounded in the situational usage of traditional sayings. However, the aim is to extract from situations the structure of usage, the psychological or social laws governing usage. The attempt is to become autonomous from the author, the audience, and the ostensive reference. It is searching for laws that will be applicable across one culture or even across cultures. In so doing, *la parole* research creates its own closed system of references in that the laws (explanations) given, varying in degrees of generality, do not refer to the situation in its fullness but to the structure identified. *La parole* research, then, grounds itself in the situational preunderstanding and aims at explaining what is seen as the universal phenomenon of using traditional sayings.

Some research having taken *la langue* orientation had already left the situation behind. This research is not grounded in situations and preunderstanding but in a system that already

explains the sayings. In psychology, anthropology, and literature, it constitutes a meta-explanation level by grounding itself on past explanations. What makes this research differ from what Ricoeur sees as the moment following explanation, namely, understanding, is that the aim of *la langue* orientation is not to resituate sayings, nor to express the world of sayings. On the contrary, it seeks to further abstract explanations by researching universality. The most complete generality is sought, the ultimate law is searched. Furthermore, what is interesting here is that *la langue* research does not rest on the world of sayings. It is, obliquely, inclined to determine human thought processes, individual and collective. These thought processes mark the goal of research. Hence, *la langue* orientation research is also explanatory of the phenomenon although its characteristics are different from *la parole* orientation. *La langue* orientation is not grounded in situations, nor does it aim at returning to them. Rather, it further abstracts and generalizes.

Situatedness and embeddedness have been seen as hurdles in paroemiological research. Ethnographers have been troubled by the danger of mistaking usage, *la parole*, for the structure of the society. Through events, they aim at structure, but the danger is that of confusing one for the other. In aiming at structure, ethnographers deny importance to their very point of departure: the event.

The main assumption in the above orientations is in the value given to explanation. The precedence given to explanations indicates a desire to treat human sciences as natural sciences. While valuing structure as a goal of research, the attempt is to objectify, to distanciate completely from the personal, the subjective, and the situated. The problem is two fold: valuing the abstract above the concrete and not trusting human researchers (they could mistake the usage for the structure). Situatedness, although recognized as essential to traditional sayings, is denied its primordiality by the value system of the research, a value system which favours distanciation without recognizing participation.

On the other hand, *la langue* paroemiologists deny the situatedness of sayings altogether. They aim at generating the grammar that makes sayings possible while not

reflecting on the *uniqueness* of usage. They are, however, still on the way to generating the grammar of traditional sayings under the topic of human theorizing, and their efforts are still programmatic. It is suggested that their efforts will remain a programme as long as paroemiologists deny the opposite pole: participation in the form of situatedness.

A final problem will be dealt with in this context. It is the problem of censure. Censure is identified as a problem denying accessibility to the goal of *completeness* of repertoires and hampering the possibility of identifying the structure of cultures. Censure, as it was detailed in the previous chapter, is a problem because of an ideal inherent to explanation: a closed system. Explanation, by establishing its own system of reference, must ensure the completeness of this system. Censure forbids some important elements from entering the system and falsifying it. The very problem of censure, because it is raised as a problem by paroemiologists, serves as another recognition that research on traditional sayings is explanatory in nature.

It has been shown that paroemiological research attempts explanation by autonomous, closed, and abstract systems. In Ricoeur's notion of hermeneutics, paroemiological research is grounded in preunderstanding and manifests the methodic moment of interpretation. Paroemiologists are, by their emphasis on explanation and within the old debate between the sciences, inclined to the natural sciences' aim. Interpretation is, for them, of relative importance. Dundes (1980) remarks that the vast majority of published writings consists solely of descriptive data and that there is relatively little interpretation of data:

> I believe that one reason for the reluctance of folklorists to attempt interpretation of their data is their tendency to treat "lore" as though it were totally separate from "folk." (p. viii)

Dundes again points to research as explanatory and to the fact that it remains explanations because of the nonvaluation of situatedness.

In conclusion, I would like to indicate that a hermeneutic study of traditional sayings, far from denying the importance of explanatory research, is responsive to it. It is a necessary moment within the dialectic of interpretation:

> *Explanation is what allows us to again follow a history when spontaneous understanding is blocked.* This accounts for the fact that explanation can be moved to various levels of generality, regularity, and thus of scientific rigor, provided that the historian does not intend to subsume a case under a law, but to interpolate a law in a story in order to make understanding possible again. (Ricoeur, 1978, p. 164-165, emphasis added)

It is then from preunderstanding and from the explanations of research that the present study will unfold within a goal of understanding.

4. *Methodos* programme

Preunderstanding, explanation, understanding: this is Paul Ricoeur's circle of interpretation. Paroemiological research has been described as explanatory. In order to present the methodological programme of the present study, two questions need to be addressed: What will constitute "understanding" as the aim of an interpretive research on traditional sayings, and what value stance will be adopted?

In order to answer the first question of what constitutes understanding in the context of this study, it must initially be pointed out that, according to Ricoeur, understanding is the nonmethodic moment of interpretation (1978). It is then difficult to establish a methodological programme per se. Methodology becomes, in this context, a guiding light, a travelling without the benefits of hindsight, as *methodos* suggests. The *methodos* in understanding is the travelling. Nevertheless, the general direction can be identified.

The characteristics of understanding in this study

Understanding, as stated by Ricoeur, has two characteristics. On the one hand, it is a resituating of explanation. Understanding takes explanation (distanciation) to participation and restores explanation within belonging. In the present study, this means that paroemiological research has to be unflattened and placed in situations, of both the original author and audience and our own time and place. The two cannot be separated. It is also necessary to do the same with the sayings themselves. They have to be probed in terms of the authors and the audiences that use them. However, it must be recalled that the shifts between

explanations and situations must be constant and continuous.

On the other hand, understanding is an exploration of the world within the text: the text of research and the text of sayings. To explore a world is to divulge the possibilities of being that it expresses. Hence, the leading question becomes: What mode of being is expressed? Ricoeur states this as "possibilities," as an investigation of a world "I might inhabit." However, understanding as an exploration of the world does not exclude understanding as resituating. On the contrary, both are inextricably linked. In his example of text interpretation, Ricoeur says,

> But there is no abrupt short circuit between the completely objective analysis of the structures of the story and the subjective appropriation of meaning: between the two lies the *world of the text*, the *meaning of the work*, that is, in the *case of story-text*, the *world of possible paths of a real action*. If a subject is called upon to understand himself in the presence of the text, it is to the extent that the text is not *closed on itself*, but open to the world which it *redescribes and refashions*. (1978, p. 155, emphasis added)

The world of the text becomes mediation between the situation and the distanciating explanation, but it is in the constant shift between positions that understanding occurs.

Traditional sayings are texts which, in our search for understanding, have become explanations through their content. The world they divulge has to be explored. Also, they have to be resituated in usage (ours or tradition's). This is the programme of interpretation. Furthermore, interpretative research on traditional sayings sees them as texts that have objectified different worlds. These worlds have to be reinstated in situations (theirs and ours) and their world unfolded. Although it is difficult to illustrate the *methodos* without the focus of a theme, an attempt will be made at this point. We are familiar with the saying "All that glitters is not gold" or "Tout ce qui reluit n'est pas d'or." A search confirms that the sayings are common sayings. They are found in Taylor (1962, p. 51) and DesRuisseaux (1978, p. 44). The preunderstanding that we have of the saying tells us that it might be used to warn against appearances. It tells us that things are not what they seem. At this point, let us assume that we cannot find, in our experience, any further understanding of the saying. In reality, however, our preunderstanding does not dry up so promptly. In order to further the research

though, let us now turn to explanations of the sayings.

Andreasen (1981, p. 220) tells us that the saying is used in psychotherapy to diagnose schizophrenia, depression, and mania. She also concludes that the proverb test method is not only unreliable, it is also an invalid instrument(p. 228): it cannot differentiate among mental diseases. A hermeneutic research will not be content to state these facts or explanations. Instead, the explanations given by Andreasen are an occasion to ponder on the nature of "All that glitters is not gold." How can it be that it can be used to differentiate psychopaths among themselves. But, the main question, it seems, has been missed by Andreasen. Why is it that the saying is presumed to differentiate between psychopaths and normal people? The explanations become an occasion to further our preunderstanding. Why is it that "normal" people inhabit the world of warning, of mistrust in the saying, while, presumably, psychopaths cannot? We find that we do not come to sayings without prior learning. We have gradually come to see the metaphoric nature of the proverb. We abstract from the literal meaning a second meaning, a more general one. Yet, we notice that children are also unable to grasp the meaning of "All that glitters is not gold." What is the nature of our system of values that associates a trait found in children with mental illness in adults? And so the questioning goes on. Everytime the path of reflection is closed, new avenues are opened by questioning explanations or by situating the reflections: that is, placing them into a context—that of the text itself, that of the origin, or that of the lived and experienced moments.

One question remains within the notion of understanding before exploring the value stance underlying interpretation. That question is: Why choose understanding as the goal of a methodology for traditional sayings? First, it has been shown that throughout history traditional sayings have been associated with pedagogy. However, paroemiological research does not deal with the topic. It is then assumed that, in the passage from preunderstanding to explanation, the didactic nature of sayings has been lost. Hence, a methodology which does not devalue situatedness will be adopted. Secondly, education is not fundamentally a learning of facts. It is not explanation only. In 1951, Ricoeur identified three types of knowledge:

ethical, scientific, and existential. These correspond, within interpretation, to understanding, explanation, and preunderstanding. Hermeneutics, as a methodology, is an attempt to view the dialectic among the three different types of knowledge in education and it is believed that pedagogy lies in understanding as a constant shuffling among these types of knowledge. Understanding, in these terms, has been absent from research. Understanding, then, as a moment following explanation and preunderstanding, is appropriate to a study of pedagogy within the subject of a didactic genre that is claimed to be quasi-universal.

The general framework of values

Since interpretation within the present study does not rely on a series of methodic steps, the general orientation and ethical choices underlying it will be presented. They will serve as guides and examples. They take the form of shifts between positions. This constant shifting reflects a change from an exclusively explanatory stance to a hermeneutic stance through the topics of abstract-experiential, simple-complex, logical-holistic, disciplined-multidisciplinary.

The first characteristic of the hermeneutical task has been abundantly expounded. It will suffice that we recall here the shift from the abstraction of conceptual systems to the concreteness of experiences. An example taken from sociology will serve to illustrate this. The following operational definition attempts to abstract a fundamentally experiential notion: values.

> By the values of a person I mean the standards that define for him how people should behave, what actions and events merit approval or condemnation and what pattern of relations should prevail among people, groups and institutions. (Nowak, 1981, p. 45)

In basing his definition of values on norms, actions and events, and models of relationships, Nowak exteriorizes values to abstract conceptual structures. Abstractions serve to illuminate other abstractions. Similarly, in paroemiology, both *la langue* and *la parole* orientations are structurally based. Through their very emphasis on structure, paroemiologists try to generate an abstract system. Depending on the particular orientation (psychology, anthropology, sociology, history, etc.) the goal is still to elaborate, like Nowak's attempt, a system of abstractions explicating human behaviour and cognition. It aims to discover laws applicable to

all times and places, including the universality of traditional sayings.

However, the role of abstractions in conceptual explanation is complemented by what Merleau-Ponty calls the "circularity" of abstract systems. Their self-referencing is always, in the final analysis, a referencing to experience without mentioning it (1945, p. iii). The importance of abstractions is to be found in their ability to bring back experience. Through abstract referencing, experience is recognized as ours: rooted in our perceptions, ideas, attitudes, feelings, and values. In other words, experience is rooted in the meaning we give to reality, but ultimately that meaning-giving to reality is grounded in experience:

> Tout ce que je sais du monde, même par la science, je le sais à partir d'une vue mienne ou d'une expérience du monde sans laquelle les symboles de la science ne voudraient rien dire. (1945, p. ii)

Hence, abstract conceptual systems of explanations are complemented by a return to experience. Experience grounds abstractions, and hermeneutics demands that abstractions be shifted to experience, to the fullness of a situation. However, experience is also complemented by abstraction.

Corresponding to the dialectic abstraction-experience, the dialectic simple-complex grounds hermeneutics. Explanation attempts to flatten out, to simplify the world. Perhaps the most striking example comes from contemporary physics:

> A une échelle de 10-29 centimètre, l'Univers est peut-être simple: il n'y existerait qu'un type de particule élémentaire et qu'une interaction importante. (Georgi, 1981, p. 68)

This example attests to a simplifying of the whole world to its most elementary equation. Such attempts emerge from the mandate of the natural sciences to ward off uncontrollability (identified as chaos). Hubert Reeves, the astrophysicist, designates the simplicity of laws, as in the example of the laws of physics, in a tremendously complex world in this way:

> Les lois de la physique n'expliquent en fait qu'une partie de la réalité. Elles décrivent *comment* les événements se passent *si* certaines conditions sont réalisées. Elles n'ont pas de contrôle sur ces conditions que les physiciens appellent les "conditions initiales," ou "aux limites." [...]
>
> En résumé, pour comprendre un fait ou un événement, il faut connaître à la fois les lois physiques qui les régissent et les cadres dans lesquels ils se situent. Ces cadres impliquent le jeu d'autres lois dans d'autres cadres. De proche en proche, ces cadres et ces lois font intervenir tout l'univers dans le temps, dans l'espace. C'est

dans cette trame que s'insère le hasard. (1982, p. 196-197, his emphasis)

The complexity of the world cannot be, and will never be, amenable to science as Reeves sees it. It is simple only through deduction. Paroemiology, influenced by the natural sciences, has sought simple laws governing the use of traditional sayings. For example, Milner (1969c) concludes:

> Sous leur forme la plus typique (sinon numériquement la plus fréquente), les locutions proverbiales étaient des énoncés quadripartites: puisqu'elles ont très longue vie (nous le savions d'entrée de jeu), nous pouvons tenir comme établi le fait que beaucoup de locutions bipartites et tripartites qui nous sont familières aujourd'hui étaient auparavant quadripartites et ont été, si l'on peut dire, érodées par l'usage continuel au cours des siècles. (p. 70)

And so, like the world that is reducible to one element, traditional sayings are reducible to one four-prong form modelled on "Better to be (1) an old man's darling (2) Than (3) a young man's warling (4)." Such laws do not answer to what Reeves calls the "framework of situations" and will never encompass the whole world of experience. Simplicity of laws are illusions, but necessary illusions.

While restoring the complexity of the world, hermeneutics does not reject simplicity for, as Ricoeur indicates (1978), explanation with its simplifying of the world comes to the rescue when complexity becomes overwhelming. Hermeneutics is the shift from valuing the simplicity of laws to valuing the interaction between simple and complex.

A third shift from explanation to interpretation, following the shift simple-complex, is the logical-holistic approach. Science, as a method and as a body of knowledge, is exclusively based on logical progression coupled with empirical observation to which has been added the element of control and manipulation through experimentation. Logic has come to represent the most important and determining factor in explanation of human life. Its aim is also geared to the rational, efficient problem-solving "improvement of mankind" (Helmstadter, 1970, p. 5). Intuition, emotions, the unconscious, and all the shadowy realms of knowledge, other than the logical, although they are recognized as existing, are mostly seen as impediments to achieving goals. They are to be overpowered because they are not understood as an integral part of human knowledge. Similarly, parameological research advocates, as its underlying aim, the

conquest of cultures through rational manipulation of cultural elements. Traditional sayings serve an even more crucial role when their didactic power is noted. For example:

> The purpose of this study was to obtain a certain amount of understanding about the concepts of some Annang proverbs collected in the cultural contexts and traditions of Southern Nigeria, with a view to applying some of them as tools of education according to present-day conditions of learning in Nigeria. (Essein, 1978)

Another striking example is the importance Parmar (1975) and UNESCO attach to the logical explanation of traditional forms of expression in order to use them to control and convince the people of India through mass-mediated use of sayings.

The logic of rationality does not answer alone to human experience and cannot fully express understanding. Merleau-Ponty makes the analogy of the relationship of rational knowledge to experience in terms of a relationship between a map and a countryside:

> Revenir aux choses mêmes, c'est revenir à ce monde avant la connaissance dont la connaissance parle toujours, et à l'égard duquel toute détermination scientifique est abstraite, significative et dépendante, comme la géographie à l'égard du paysage où nous avons d'abord appris ce que c'est qu'une forêt, une prairie ou une rivière. (1945, p. iii)

However, in a hermeneutical dialectic the distanciation from preunderstanding as created by logical knowledge is a mediation in understanding, if there is a constant return to its grounds. Explanation can be seen as a bouncing board. At times it is confirmed by experience; at other times, it in no way comes close to experience. Explanation serves as a basis for critique leading to rejection or acceptance of the rational abstract system.

A study of traditional sayings must take into account the whole of the situation, not only the elements that can be put in logical terms. This is paradoxical and difficult since this very study is expressed in the logic of academic inquiry. But constant referencing will be made to a-logical, experiential grounding in an effort to bring experience and preunderstanding to light.

It is customary in academic explorations to delimit the field of inquiry into disciplines. The format structuring the academic world, the division of knowledge into various disciplines as a consequence of scientific theorizing, while providing for specialized growth and sophistication of rational explanation within each particular field, is limiting our

understanding. As a consequence of Ricoeur's dialectical approach to interpretation, the field of inquiry of the present study has to be shifted from discipline oriented to interdisciplinary.

The main difficulty in a discipline oriented study is that, while it allows the construction of systems of explanation, it limits what is accepted as knowledge.

> Il faudrait aussi reconnaître dans ce qu'on appelle non pas les sciences, mais les "disciplines", un autre principe de limitation. Principe lui aussi relatif et mobile. Principe qui permet de construire, mais selon un jeu étroit. (Foucault, 1971, p. 31)

According to Foucault the structuring into disciplines is a principle of control of knowledge production. It fixes limitations through acceptance of propositions. For a statement, a proposition, or a study to belong to a discipline, it must fulfil three conditions. It must address itself first to a predetermined plan of the object of study: the mind, the body, the insect, the genes, etc. Thus, it limits the horizon of study and disallows totality. Secondly, belonging to a discipline demands that a certain type of theoretical horizon be adopted. This horizon is inherently explanatory. Thirdly, it demands that predefined conceptual instruments and techniques be used. The scientific, prescriptive method is a witness to this. The very notion of disciplines, hence, is intimately intertwined with explanation, and like explanation it is restrictive and reductive in nature.

Further to reduction, disciplines can be seen as relative and self-sanctioning. The reactualization of limitations of study objects, of theoretical horizons, and of concepts and methodology serves to perpetuate the orientation. Disciplines not only define the parameters of research but also determine the truth and falsity of research. Mendel's nineteenth-century propositions on heredity were rejected by contemporary biology. The discipline rejected what was not current knowledge. It did so because Mendel's propositions were new objects of study that called for new conceptual instruments and new theoretical foundations (Foucault, 1971, p. 37). The very organization into disciplines must then be seen as relative.

Paroemiology, in its difficulty to enter whole-heartedly into one single discipline, attests to the necessity of reconceptualizing theoretically another foundation for its studies. Its advent at the periphery of experimental psychology, sociology, anthropology, and linguistics,

among others, has provided numerous explanations that in the present study will be introduced by pulling the appropriate considerations from each discipline. The attempt of the present dissertation is then to be interdisciplinary although such studies are rare in paroemiology (Dundes, 1980, p. vi). The mechanical problem of interdisciplinary research is, as Dundes points out, the locating of the vast amount of studies that appear in "an incredible and often bewildering variety of books, monographs and professional periodicals" (p. vii). Patient and ever arduous research can provide an impressive array of disparate literature. For the present study, research is always beginning anew into some new field, or tangent, or historical period.

In conclusion, in order to establish the methodological programme of a study on traditional sayings based on the hermeneutics of Paul Ricoeur, two questions were answered: What will constitute understanding and what value stance will be adopted? Since understanding is the nonmethodic moment of interpretation, an explication of its meaning is followed by attitudes which underlie the study. These witness a shift in importance. Where explanation favours abstraction, law-like simplicity, logic, and a disciplined orientation, hermeneutics establishes the dialectic between abstractions and experience, law-like simplicity and the complexity of the world, logic and the a-logical totality of experience, academic disciplines and an interdisciplinary orientation. The emphasis is placed on the dialectic between the series of notions rather than on their mutual exclusion. For example, to acknowledge the importance of a multidisciplinary approach is not to advocate such an approach for studies in general. Hermeneutics recognizes the importance of disciplines and the distanciating function that they fulfil. It is *because* disciplines exist that an interdisciplinary approach is made possible.

D. Conclusion

For the hermeneutical tradition, the debate between explanation and understanding is based on the pursuit of a valued methodology:

> In the mind of Dilthey, the most typical German representative of the theory of *Verstehen* at the turn of the century, it was not all a matter of opposing some kind of Romantic obscurantism to the scientific spirit handed down from Galileo, Descartes, and Newton. Rather, it was a matter of giving *understanding a scientific respectability*

> *equal to that of explanation*. Thus, Dilthey was not able to restrict himself to founding understanding on our ability to transfer ourselves into another's phychic life on the basis of signs the other gives us. (Ricoeur, 1978, p. 150, emphasis added)

By answering the challenge of objectivity, Dilthey wanted to find a method which would equal the natural sciences in respectability, credibility, and efficiency. The goal was based on success. In this tradition it is difficult not to be swept by justifications and desires of success in the mode of sciences. However, hermeneutics was adopted as a method for very different reasons. The following have been given:

- the inability of paroemiology to define traditional sayings,
- the difficulties with a basic element of traditional sayings namely: situatedness and the fear of incomplete repertoires: censure,
- a general malaise in research where the topic revolves at the periphery of many disciplines but is never taken completely as a significant topic in and of itself,
- pedagogy is mentioned as an essential feature of traditional sayings, but research is inattentive to this fact in that it does not attempt to probe this pedagogic power.

The interest in hermeneutics lies ultimately in an assumption that pedagogy cannot be explained: that pedagogy is essentially a mode of being amenable to understanding only. Explanation flattens pedagogy to a system of prescriptions. However, because distanciation is the relief moment from participation, because explanation lends itself to critical questioning, and because it stems from preunderstanding, explanation is a part of interpretation. The key is not to see explanation as an end in itself. In the world of traditional sayings lies a mode of being that we could call pedagogic. This world is the world we, as educators, parents, academicians, might (and often do) inhabit. Such is the focus of the study and the reason for the choice of hermeneutics as a *methodos*.

IV. Tradition and traditional sayings

A. Introduction

In employing a hermeneutic approach, we naturally turn to the words that we have at hand: "traditional sayings." "Tradition" is the first word that we can explore in order to gain an understanding of the pedagogic voice of traditional sayings. The difficulty of understanding tradition will now be the topic of study so that we can better undertand how it can be said that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice. What is pedagogic in tradition? How can it be said that tradition in traditional sayings speaks with a pedagogic voice? Traditional sayings express tradition through the medium of language. The etymology of the word "tradition" offers interesting associations that our modern definition of the term has lost. Today, tradition is "the transmission of knowledge, opinions, doctrines, customs, and practices from generation to generation" (Funk & Wagnell, 1966). It is the passing on of past cultural acquisitions of a people to its young ones. This perspective asserts two elements of major importance. First, the existence of past cultural accumulations is recognized. Human actions can create objectifications or sedimentations that are available to others and to future generations. Secondly, this body of accumulated objectifications is picked up again and again by individuals who, in the process, carry it over in time. This element introduces the duration aspect of tradition. It must be noted that tradition, although it refers to the body of accumulations, at the same time designates the process of intersubjective transmission that not only assures the immutability of the objectifications but also ensures the valuation of the tradition by providing the individual with equipment for life. This process is related to the role played by the notion of "world view."

Both elements included in today's perspective of tradition, that is, objectification and transmission of a world view, are related to pedagogy. The objectifications are the subject matter in schools, the curriculum, the textbooks, and the reference materials that are presented as knowledge. The transfer through time of this body of knowledge is usually seen as a

transmission from older generations, teachers, and parents, to younger generations. This process of transmitting a body of knowledge through time from the past to the present provides what is called an education: the intricate weaving of traditional knowledge and personal experience into an ethical world.

The two above notions of tradition and pedagogy are also evident in traditional sayings. First, traditional sayings, such as proverbs, maxims, precepts, and saws, are linguistic objectifications of knowledge. For example, the Yoruba saying "The hand never makes a one-way trip to the mouth" (Lindfors & Owomoyela, 1973, p. 33) expresses a trite and true observation that the hand never stays close to the mouth. It also expresses a second level of knowledge, a valuative knowledge that coming back from a journey is important for the Yoruba. The proverb is used only to wish a safe journey and a safe return to travellers. Furthermore, the sayings have been said time and time again, thus assuring their transmission and their survival. The saying of tradition has been, everytime, a unique individual event. It has, however, created a sedimentation that has survived the ephemeral event of the act of saying. Traditional sayings, by their content, present a view of the world that users reactivate, consciously or not. Objectification, intersubjective transmission, and the formation of a world view are recurrent themes in paroemiological research.

The etymology of the word "tradition" proposes an alternate perspective on the notion of tradition. This perspective will now be inserted with the two major elements identified above. Tradition, from the Indo-Europeen root of the word *do* (Greek *diclonai*) is connected to the notion of giving (Picoche, 1979, p. 218). It is the act of giving, of surrendering. It became linked in imperial Latin to *traditor* meaning master. Gradually, the association of giving and surrendering became tied to power; tradition and treason became doublets. To give, with its positive and its negative connotations, are two moments on the same continuum. Giving becomes a matter of treason when the giver is completely overpowered by the master to whom he or she has been given. The etymology of the word tradition reintroduces the delicate balance of values in a debate that is usually carried on today in terms of tradition versus

ideology. Paul Ricoeur, in "Ethics and culture" (1973), identifies the conflict underlying the negative and positive evaluations of tradition in this way:

> It is here that the debate really begins, for this authority [of tradition] can appear to us in turn as a form of violence exercised against our thinking, which prevents us from advancing to maturity of judgment, or as a means of assistance, as a necessary guide on the pathway from infancy to maturity. (p. 155)

Hence, ideology is a distortion stemming from violence and repression: treason. On the other hand, tradition is what makes possible thoughts and actions in their particular form. These two positions, like gift and treason, are, according to Ricoeur, positions that dialectically answer each other. They bring to importance the equilibrium to be achieved between communication and separation. The dialectic focusses on the necessity of each. For the present chapter, then, two sections are proposed: 1) the nature of objectification in traditional sayings, and 2) the expression of a world exposing the dialectic between tradition as violence and tradition as assistance.

Before entering the topic of tradition as presented in traditional sayings, one task remains. It is that of delimiting the debate on tradition within traditional sayings and of presenting the particular orientation that the debate has taken. This will provide a background and focus for the questions raised within the two sections identified above.

B. Tradition related issues in paroemiology

A first pervasive question raised in paroemiology deals with the alleged disappearance of traditional sayings. At the onset of the twentieth century, and ever since, the realization became: "Are proverbs and traditional sayings disappearing?" (Hulme, 1932). Three reasons are given. The first has to do with the nature of valued knowledge. Traditional sayings stand at the junction of the debate between popular and scientific knowledge. The historical review of traditional saying has shown the shift of value between the proverb and the maxim in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Europe. This shift indicated a change of value from common experience to rational explanations. Abrahams (1970) states: "The proverb, like so many other terms of art in folkloristics, is in general parlance synonymous with falsehood these

days or at least with outmoded truths" (p. 425). What interests could we have in a saying like "When the cock crows on the dunghill, The weather will change or it will stay as it is " (Taylor, 1962, p. 113). The dunghills have disappeared, just like the cock has. The saying does not have a metaphoric meaning and thus cannot be applied to nonliteral situations. Furthermore, the cock has been replaced by any metereologist who "crows" for us every hour if we so wish. Similarly, research on the use of proverbs in English Renaissance Health Books situate the usage, (or nonusage) of proverbs within the learned versus popular valuation of knowledge. In this case, when popular knowledge was still viewed as important, proverbs were inserted into medical texts in order to substantiate the new medical knowledge (Woodburn, 1975). Finally, Dundes (1980) states:

> For the long-standing pejorative association of error with folklore as with such other terms as myth, superstition, old wives' tales, etc., would make it appear that folklore is precisely what science has advanced *from*!!! Folk medicine continues to be contrasted with scientific medicine—the implication clearly being that in an ideal world the former should be completely replaced by the latter. (p. 1)

The alleged disappearance of traditional sayings is linked to a debate that is a sign of the modern era and that opposes, under different terminology, the learned (scientific) and the popular, the rational and the a-rational. This debate assigns different values to truth and thus to valued knowledge. Traditional sayings and their disappearance can then be understood as pointers of modern knowledge valuations.

The second reason given for the disappearance of traditional sayings is tied to the modern notion of change as progress. Tradition is seen as the opposite of progress (Taylor, 1962; Abrahams, 1970). Holbek (1970), for example, states:

> The proverb illuminates the event with the light of tradition (This, as everyone knows, is the reason why proverbs disappear from use in our changing society: the steady light of tradition is too feeble to compete with the newpapermen's flashbulbs). (p. 470)

An example of change as cause of disappearance is given by McKnight (1970) in his study of Palauan proverbs:

> With the gradual dissipation of political authority to new forms and with the increasing "westernization" of learning and behavior, the *blukul a tekoi* (traditional sayings) are respected as archaic. The elder speaker must avoid using them or, in

> order to be understood, he must explain them and in so doing remove the spark and zest from his speech. (p. 5)

The traditional saying "Like the honey bee, celebrating without first boiling down the coconut syrup" (McKnight, p. 7) is not only incomprehensible to us but, it is becoming incomprehensible to the Palauan themselves because of changing tradition. The coconut syrup dripping from the cut flower stem used to be thickened by boiling. The saying spoke of an unfinished task, like the honeybee that celebrates the picking of the nectar but has not boiled it. As the ways of life change, so does the understanding of traditional sayings. The disappearance of traditional sayings is associated with changes that bring people into a modern, Westernized way of life. Often this change becomes an opposition of tradition versus progress.

The third reason given for the disappearance of traditional sayings, although linked to the first two, takes a distinctly socio-political orientation. With the rise of the state as educational agent, the nature of the knowledge passed outside of the educational institutions is strictly linked to the values that are placed on knowledge other than the knowledge of the state. In the distinction between women and men as educators of their own children and a centralized state educational system lies a repartition of knowledge. Traditional sayings are valued mostly within the family and social group. The rise of state schools has diminished the importance of knowledge valued in the family and the social sphere:

> Le problème du rôle de l'école, comparé à celui de la famille se pose ainsi de façon très nette. Au début du vingtième siècle, on aime encore donner aux enfants un proverbe à commenter en guise de rédaction. Les leçons de morale illustrent souvent certains préceptes, du genre "bien mal acquit ne profite jamais". Mais on ne pouvait enrayer ainsi le déclin de l'emploi du proverbe. Pouvait-on espérer diffuser la *culture populaire par l'école, surtout l'école d'autrefois qui banissait le patois*? Ce n'était d'ailleurs pas le but de ce genre d'exercice. On pensait seulement rendre concrètes les leçons de morale par la référence à des proverbes connus, éléments d'un patrimoine culturel commun. L'école n'a donc pas été le mode de transmission préférentiel des proverbes; la transmission par la famille et le groupe social devrait y préexister et y co-exister. (Loux & Richard, 1978, p. 233 emphasis added)

Thus, modern schools have played a role in the transmission of learned or literary traditional sayings but have had little impact on the transmission of other forms of traditional sayings and have contributed to their disappearance.

The reasons given by paroemiologists for the fading of traditional sayings are enlightening because they provide clues as to the nature of the sayings and to our contemporary historical context. The antinomies presented will serve as *Leitmotive* for this chapter. They are learned and popular, change and tradition, family and state education. However, a last issue is of interest in the debate on whether traditional sayings are disappearing or not. It is the position that they are not disappearing.

Some paroemiologists argue that traditional sayings are not disappearing but only changing. Two changes are evidenced. One is a change of content: the other a change in usage. Abrahams (1970) and Mieder and Mieder (1977-1978) among others, point out innovations in sayings. For example, "A friend in need is a friend indeed" is being transformed, due to the new context of youth sub-cultures, into "A friend in weed is a friend indeed." Likewise, a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio contest launched on March 5, 1982, was entitled "Maxims for our times." The aim was to "choose one of those old saws you have and give it a little extra meaning for today, for our time." It fostered the active involvment of the public in transforming traditional sayings. A further example is a book by James Feibleman entitled *News Proverbs For Our Day* (1978) in which old proverbs are modified and new ones coined, mostly by transformation. The above indicate that traditional sayings can change, be modified and adapted, and that the same process that has led to changes in the past is still at work. Sayings have changed. The historical collections witness it, and they are still changing. Mieder and Mieder (1977-1978) put it this way:

> Changing times and situations require forms of expression which the traditional forms no longer can supply. However, it often suffices to adapt an antiquated folklore item to the modern context. This process of innovation on the basis of tradition then becomes the proof of the continuity of the traditional forms. (p. 308)

The second type of change, that of usage, is also studied by Mieder and Mieder who say:

> Although one would perhaps have to agree that proverbs are today used less frequently in their traditional way, i.e. as a didactic piece of wisdom, one glance at the advertising of any magazine or newspaper shows that proverbs have become the most popular folklore item used by Madison Avenue. (p. 308)

What Mieder and Mieder point out is a second adaptation of sayings to the contemporary

culture: to the necessities of advertising. The saying "Different strokes for different folks" has been adapted by Volkswagen to "Different Volks for different folks." When McDonald's came out with their "quarter pounder," they ran a two page ad with the headline "Man does not live by bread alone" (Mieder & Mieder, p. 316). These changes in traditional sayings provide precious information as to their nature since it is not only in their stability that they can be understood but also in their mutations.

In conclusion, issues related to tradition, as they are found in the research on sayings, provide new *Leitmotive*: the popular versus the learned, progress versus tradition, family versus state education, and innovations of context and of usage. The question now is not: Are traditional sayings disappearing, changing, or surviving intact? It is rather: How do the issues, evidenced by research and the elements extracted from the definition and the etymology of the word "tradition," lead to understanding? From explanations, derived through the above, what is the world of traditional sayings and how does it unfold? How does it relate to specific usage situations and how does it speak about pedagogy?

C. Traditional sayings and the objectification of past human actions perspective

The ethnographic study of Arewa and Dundes (1964) on Yoruba proverbs introduces the relationship between objectification and traditional sayings. Proverbs are claimed to be "impersonal vehicules for personal communication" (p. 70). In the parent-child relation, parents

> may well use a proverb to direct the child's action or thought, but by using a proverb, the parental imperative is externalized and removed somewhat from the individual parent. The guilt or responsibility for directing the child is projected on the anonymous past. (p. 70)

The saying "We use a closed fist for tapping our chest" (p. 76) recommends family unity. The closed fist is a gesture of solidarity while tapping the chest with the fist is a characteristic gesture indicating boasting. The saying can be used by parents to ask, for example, that brothers be present when one of them is courting a girl. Boasting can only occur when solidarity is shown. "We use a closed fist for tapping our chest" is a saying which, when

spoken in a situation, extracts from the past a piece of knowledge relevant for the here-and-now. It is not the parent but the "One," the "Elders," the "They" who speak and direct action. Similarly, the saying "Love is blind" (Taylor, 1962, p. 61) brings an anonymous presence into the usage situation. From somewhere in the past, comes a sentence that removes doubts of incredibility and inserts speaking into a past that commands, directs, or describes. In the speaking of objectifications is disclosed the nonpersonal nature of saying through distanciation (the "They") and anonymity. To these, the underlying themes of authorship and stability will be added.

1. The meaning of objectification

> The parental imperative is externalized and removed somewhat from the individual parent. (Arewa & Dundes, 1964, p. 70)

Arewa and Dundes explore the significance of speaking through the words of tradition. The process of externalizing and creating an object of human action has been called objectification (Ricoeur, 1973; Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Schutz, 1970; Merleau-Ponty, 1945). The term refers to the sense we have that words have become like objects that can be picked up at will.

I have around me, as I write, numerous collections of sayings. I pick one up. It is a book of *Persian Proverbs*. As I leaf through the repertoire, I notice the following: "The onion has mixed itself with the fruit" (Elwell-Sutton, 1954, p. 57). The saying is foreign to me, but I can pick it up, and turn it around in my mind. What could it mean? In what kind of situation can it be said? My automatic response was to ask: In what kind of situation can it be *used*? This is indicative that I felt it was like an object. I close the book and the saying returns to its inanimate, forgotten state. I can retrieve it, time and time again, at will. I do so and this time I read the interpretation: "Someone has joined a group of people more important than himself." Yes, I can see the meaning although the exclusive terminology of "himself" is noticed first. I will put this saying back on its shelf to be contemplated rather than *used*.

Now, I retrieve Maloux (1966) and on page 225 I find "Plus on est de fous, plus on rit." This saying is familiar to me, and like the Persian proverb, I can retrieve and dispense it

at will, although it is already less of an object. Through familiarity, there is a sense of belonging and of participation which eclipses the object. However, once the first reaction of familiarity is passed, I realize that I am not in the saying. No, I am not in the saying in a very profound way. It comes from past minds and is already shaped. That's what makes it impersonal. Yet, it does not exclude belonging. The meaning of the word "on" is an interesting display of inclusion and exclusion. The French personal pronoun "on" comes from the Latin *homo* and has taken an indeterminate meaning referring to anyone, no one in particular (Grévisse, 1975, pp. 555-557). At the same time, "on" means "nous," a collective pronoun including the speaker. In traditional sayings, this double play of meaning is experienced just as it is in the word "on": the belonging also becomes exclusion.

The association of traditional sayings with objectifications recognizes that sayings lead an autonomous life in so far as they have become detached from the original authors, the original audience, and the original situation. Sayings have become objects, linguistic objects exterior to face-to-face situations. In this way, sayings are a repository of vast accumulations of meanings and experiences that can be preserved in time and transmitted to the following generations. In the actual experiencing of the saying, however, their appearance as objects can offer a sense of belonging. What is this world of accumulations that have been called objectifications in the form of traditional sayings and that share the characteristic of nonpersonalness?

2. The characteristic of nonpersonalness

Paroemiologists customarily explain nonpersonalness through the following expressions:

> the impersonal community consensus they invoke (Kirshenblatt-Gimlett, 1973, p. 821)
>
> they are universal statements (Barley, 1972, p. 739)
>
> impersonal vehicules (Arewa & Dundes, 1964, p. 70)

> being old, they carry the stamp and dignity of antiquity (Hulme, 1932, p. 6)
>
> users can in doubtful case hide behind this traditional sanction from public censure (Jason, 1971, p. 617)

Directly or indirectly, all of these quotations present traditional sayings from the perspective of an opposition between the individual and the nonindividual, the I and the They, self and other.

Distanciation as I versus They

The speaker of a traditional saying reformulates the words of others exactly as they have been spoken: "Plus on est de fou, plus on rit." This introduces two elements of foreignness: person and time. Dealing with the personal element, this means that the saying of a proverb favours the world of the They. In "Every cloud has a silver lining" (Taylor, 1962, p. 111) the world is not specified, but the I is absent from the general meaning in the sense that it is everyone who is included. The intentions of the speaker are less important than the experience deposited in the saying, and the speaker is instrumental in the re-activation of meanings and experiences that others have created. It is not I as an individual who is important in the uttering of the saying. It does not matter who says it. Yet, the saying does express a world although it is not mine. It is a world that others have observed and spoken. The "silver lining" and the "cloud" do not come from my perspective but from the perspective of the Elders, the They, whose eyes have noticed the sun shine on the edge of clouds. It is They, also, who have observed that there is good in everyone and in every situation.

Nonpersonalness gives primacy to the domain of the They, a domain of experience which is not that of the I. It is the recognition that the person participates in a world that is exterior, outside of the self. Furthermore, this world is given a greater importance. The They intimidates the I. The truth spoken is greater than my truth. Apostel (1979) gives an interesting ilustration of this. According to his study, when faced with a proverb which may seem suspicious to an individual, the reaction will be to interpret the saying metaphorically rather than to discard it as false. Hence nonpersonalness is sensed as an important characteristic of traditional sayings. The magnitude of the They takes precedence.

The nonpersonalness of traditional sayings is further expressed as a universal appeal through explanations of general statements. "Every cloud" says the proverb. The term "every" speaks to our experience of generality: it means everyone, and if it means everyone, it is not me alone as an individual. "Every cloud has a silver lining" is also a general statement about the world, one in which the good wanders with the bad, sunshine with rain. The saying utters a state of affairs that holds, implicitly, for every situation possible. There is a sunshine hiding behind every cloud, it says. In making such a general statement, the saying tells us that this is not a personal affair.

Time also serves a distanciating function. To the I-They opposition is added the Now-Then distinction. The Yoruba proverb "The hand never makes a one-way trip to the mouth" (Lindfors & Owomoyela, 1973, p. 33) implicitly states that then, in the old times, it used to be so that the hand always returned from the mouth and that, thus, travellers always returned. Since this used to be true in the past, it must be true now. This is the deduction made by usage. However, the intent is that the past truth will materialize itself now. The hand will return from the mouth. Traditional sayings not only express a world of the They but also a past world that has acquired a greater importance than the now. This position was also present in Hulme's notion of the "dignity of antiquity" and Jason's words of "traditional sanction from public censure." Both paroemiologists point to what experience confirms: that is, the past offers a valid and powerful position of truth that can be applied in the present for the benefit of the speaker. A break is being created between present and past in such a way that the past can be given a positive value. Again, it takes precedence over the I who is here and now.

While it can be acknowledged that traditional sayings are sedimentations of past experiences and meanings that have acquired the objective status of nonpersonalness, I would now like to show that the paroemiologist's position has to be complemented on two levels: on the importance of distanciation and on the commonalities between the I and the They as seen through the considerations of historical consciousness.

The importance of distanciation

Objectivation is considered in studies on traditional sayings as an essential element of their nature. However, by pointing out nonpersonalness and distanciation, paroemiologists never reinstitute the importance of the dialectic between participation and distanciation. On the one hand, the saying "Plus on est de fous, plus on rit" offered an experience of belonging. What is this experience? On the other hand, Paul Ricoeur (1973) posits in "The hermeneutical function of distanciation" that distanciation is not only at the heart of human action by creating cultural objects that survive space, time, and social situation as objectifications do, but also that distanciation is at the heart of "appropriation." Appropriation can be expressed, in this context, as learning and acting in new ways. It is the act of making one's own, of bringing to one's belonging. It speaks directly of pedagogy that guides learning or appropriation. In traditional sayings this means that the I needs the They in order to gain understanding. The question is, then, not to isolate the I versus the They, but rather to place I and They in a dialectical relationship where one is the pre-condition for the other in the sense that the They is a collection of I's who have created objectifications together. The They is a precondition for self understanding. This can be exemplified through the question of authorship.

The origin of traditional sayings has always been a debated issue in paroemiology. A number of sources are identified: oral traditions (Hulme, 1932, p. 3; Taylor, 1969, p. 35), the Bible (Kuusi, 1973, p. 779; Taylor, 1962, p. 32), literary tradition (Jason, 1971, p. 617) and the *bons mots* of individuals. The role played by individuals and collectivities in the genesis of proverbs is constantly shuffled. The following is an example of the anthropological position taken by Shimkin and Sanjuan:

> Ubiquitous in Russian folk speech, and held by the peasant to be a guide to accepted behavior, proverbs are more likely to represent the viewpoints and expressions current in given communities than individual inventions or preferences. (1953, p. 329)

The debate on origin and authorship of traditional sayings is interesting because it points to the dialectic between the I and the They without acknowledging it. It appears as a problem area, but paroemiologists do not probe conditions of the debate.

Kuusi's analysis (1973) of the formation of phrases as the basis for proverbs indicates that in their very formation a process of interaction of individual with social preexisting objectifications is necessary. For example, she traces formation on set phrases that in terms of their meaning appeared to be original and unique:

> Better late than never.
> Better safe than sorry.
> Better bend than break.

Many are formed, according to her, by analogy. Her study provides an explanation for the I-They dialectic in authorship. The saying is changed by the initiative of an individual since it always had to be enunciated at one moment or another by an individual. However, the initiative is not gratuitous because it is based on a previous saying. Ricoeur in "Ethics and culture" says:

> From another point of view, wise men are the first to say that they do not invent anything, that they rather rediscover an ancient law, whether this forgotten law be that of nature, or of feeling, or of reason. Here is the most extreme antinomy: the only true creators, it seems, are those who are capable at the same time of reactivating the meaning of or the feeling for an *ordo amoris* which it is not ours to create. (1973, p. 154)

Traditional sayings are never, at their origin, a pure creation. The process of creation is always dialectic. Paulhan's (1966) experience of proverbs exemplifies this point. He indicates that proverbs created for him "moulds" into which he could pour hundreds of reproductions of new sayings. He says:

> Je passai aisément de:
> *Ame d'esclave: détruire*
> à
> *Ame d'Iketake*(nom de petite fille): *faire la coquette*
> *Ame d'enfant: ne penser à rien.*
> De la même façon:
> *Si les dents sont cassées, c'est la tête qu'on blâme*
> devenait
> *Si les cheveux sont blancs, c'est la tête qu'on blâme*
> Ou bien encore:
> *Comme se gare l'aveugle: c'est quand il a été touché qu'il se penche de côté.*
> appelait
> *Comme la souris esquive les coups: c'est quand elle a été toucheé qu'elle saute de côté.*
> (p. 112)

The creative process of coining new sayings is not gratuitous; it depends on past structures.

The I needs the They to create.

In 1983, the definition of authorship has taken a very individualistic perspective that often denies the dialectic I-They. On April 6th, 1983, a law suit was reported over the authorship of the song "9 to 5":

> The suit claims the song 9 to 5, which was written and sung by Parton for the movie of the same, was based in part on a song entitled Money World that the Goldbergs wrote and performed on behalf of Hayden's unsuccessful 1976 campaign for the U.S. Senate. (*Edmonton Journal*, April 6, 1983)

The point of this example is not whether or not plagiarism occurred but that in an era where authorship is a private affair and where dialectic can be seen as plagiarism, it is not surprising that paroemiologists have questioned the authorship of traditional sayings.

Authorship, as an issue in traditional sayings, has served in this study as an occasion to restore the dialectic between the I and the They and to indicate the importance of nonpersonalness, of distanciation. Objectifications do not serve a role of nonpersonalness that opposes I and They. Rather, sedimentations are the very conditions for learning (understanding). I recognize that "Every cloud has its silver lining" is not original when I say it. I also recognize that its formulation is not tied to my here-and-now. Yet, reflections on its meaning help me understand my own situation. That, for example, dissertation writing, although sometimes it appears like a cloud, may be valuable, satisfying, and even pleasant. If a dissertation is a cloud over one's head, the sun cannot be far behind. In the saying, the present situation, the personal, rejoins the nonpersonal. The I is consoled by the They. At the same time, the saying is an occasion to take a distance from the self; it is an occasion to consider the They, but it is also a condition for understanding one's situation better. Distanciation (They) creates a break with participation (I) in such a way that it is possible to learn about an experience that, being so close, would otherwise be unknowable. Ricoeur concluded: "I continue to think that in last analysis the text [distanciation] is the mediation by which we understand ourselves" (1973, p. 141). And to Ricoeur, self-understanding, in the end, is synonymous with understanding.

Pedagogy is present in this first stage of understanding tradition. By their very appearance as objects that are nonpersonal, traditional sayings offer an occasion for distanciation. They effect a withdrawal from the personal perspective. I am not in the cloud with a silver lining. The statement focusses attention on others or the world. When attention returns to the I, it is in a position to consider the I anew—just like the general statement "Every cloud has a silver lining," speaking of optimism behind adversity, allows for a re-viewing of dissertation writing. Fundamentally, this is learning, and traditional sayings guide pedagogically: that is, to learning.

In conclusion, the importance of distanciation does not stand only as a statement of nonpersonalness, of timidity before the They and the past, but, rather, it lies in its function as a condition to understanding within a dialectical relationship. However, I and They are not only in a dialectical relationship in traditional sayings; they are also united on common grounds.

Commonalities between I and They

Do traditional sayings divulge a nonpersonal world only? It has been shown that nonpersonalness has an important function to play in understanding. On the other hand, however, the nonpersonalness of traditional sayings has to be modified because the world of traditional sayings is never completely nonpersonal, nor foreign. Rather, it is also a common world that grounds experience of objectifications. This commonness will be studied through the notions of historical consciousness, anonymity, the writing process, and consensus.

In the saying "Familiarity breeds contempt" (Taylor, 1962, p. 146), there is a sense of common knowledge that is expressed. The act of saying restores a perspective of well-known information. The saying has been heard many times, and it tells of a perspective we have in common: to be too familiar with something leads to a less positive attitude towards the object of familiarity. We know that we take for granted, or forget to appreciate fully, the objects and the people that surround us. This is common among the members of a culture, and together we feel that "familiarity breeds contempt."

Traditional sayings express common sense knowledge (Nemerov, 1978, p. 42). It is customary to equate common sense with a sense that commends itself as being in accordance to reason and good judgment. However, the words "common sense" should point to more than a personal judgement but to a judgment that sounds and feels right because it is held in *common* between speaker-hearer, reader-text.

> Proverbs sound authoritative. The truths they proclaim feel absolute. This impression is *created by the proverb's traditionality and the weight of impersonal community consensus it invokes*. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1973, p. 821, emphasis added)

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett is linking together tradition, nonpersonalness, and commonness in her description of the power of proverbs. Along with Nemerov, she points to traditional sayings as the common within the impersonal. "Familiarity breeds contempt" is not a personal statement, but it is held in common.

Merleau-Ponty in "Autrui et le monde humain" (1945) helps us effect a reversal of subjectivity and objectivity in order to understand what happens between the personal and the nonpersonal:

> De même que la nature pénètre jusqu'au centre de ma vie personnelle et s'entrelace avec elle, de même les comportements descendent dans la nature et s'y déposent sous la forme d'un monde culturel. (p. 399)

The personal is formed only in contact with the objectifications of the world. We are shaped by contacts with sayings like "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose" (Maloux, 1960, p. 232). The I and the They pull perceptions from worlds they hold in common: the cultural, that of traditional sayings, for example, and the natural world. Objectifications become the cultural objects that unite individuals by presenting a common world. Commonness is two-fold. It is the commonality of the exterior world, but it is also the experiences that are similar because of a common humanity and of a mediation by a common exterior world.

To a common world of objectivations that moulds the present, Gadamer's (1975) notion of historical consciousness must be added. History precedes every individual. Because we cannot extract ourselves from our historical situation, nor place ourselves at a distance from it, tradition is not foreign to any of us. History fashions our consciousness. We are all

submitted to the effects of history, and the saying "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose" moulds our perception even though it is the product of past consciousness. Our consciousness is not only common in the present moment; it is also subjected to the effects of history in the sense that historical developments have an influence on present consciousness. Palauan sayings are particularly interesting illustrations of the historical consciousness which moulds present perceptions. Many Palauan sayings use proper nouns that are directly ingrained in the mythology of the Polynesian people. The saying "Revealed at Usu Point" (Schultz, 1965, p. 54) is incomprehensible to us, but, to the Palauans, it condenses the story of an avaricious woman who lived in Falelatai. She used to hide her food, so the stories goes, rather than share it with her relatives. Her family tried in vain to cure her of her vice. When the truth became known to the villagers, they cut off one of her fingers, buried it at Usu Point, and erected a little mount as a warning to others. Schultz (1965) says that the mount is still visible today. Thus, the saying "Revealed at Usu Point," while it insinuates that hidden vices will eventually come to light, expresses the moulding of consciousness through history. Today's notion that vices cannot be hidden forever, for the Palauans, is deeply grounded in the fabric of history.

Similarly, the French expression "La faim de Sancerre" (Quittard, 1842/1968, p. 368) refers to the siege of the Calvinists in the city of Sancerre during 8 months of 1573. Stories were told of eating leather, parchments, animals, and even people. Thus, the saying, "La faim de Sancerre," for us today, grounds hunger in a desperate situation of famine.

To a study of traditional sayings, Merleau-Ponty and Gadamer bring insights that the explanations of paroemiological research had not distinguished. Although it is customary for paroemiologists to hint at the commonness of the world of traditional sayings, it is never identified beyond the naming. Spurred by Merleau-Ponty, we interpret sayings as objects that come to the very core of the I by shaping consciousness. Further, the new interpretation says that the sense of knowing in common (common sense), alluded to by Nemerov, is deeply lived by a commonness of world that the perspective of impersonalness cannot divulge.

Traditional sayings are quoted as being anonymous, with no known author. Although the importance of the dialectic between the I and the They has already been presented, it should now be complemented by a reflection on the notion of anonymity. The term refers to the absence of author, of name, and often is extended to mean foreign, other, or impersonal. Arewa and Dundes (1964) said in relation to parents' use of traditional sayings: "The guilt or responsibility for directing the child is projected onto the anonymous past, the anonymous folk" (p. 70). To use a saying to reprimand a child does not, according to Arewa and Dundes, place the guilt or the hurt on the user but transfers it to the responsibility of the They, the not I. But, is it really so? Is there not a sense of complicity in the usage of the saying, a sense that emanates from the commonness of world and the commonness of history?

We do not know how "Quand la maison est trop haute, il n'y a rien au grenier" (Quittard, 1842/1968, p. 437) came into being. Quittard in his *Dictionnaire étymologique des proverbes* does not know either. What does the saying say to us? For experience, it is of little relevance that we know the author. But the mask that the author (or authors) wears allows the feeling that we are in the saying. We enter the perspective that when a body is too well developed, it is to the expense of the mind. The mask of anonymity allows me to enter and feel at home in the saying without a sense of dislodging the rightful inhabitant.

Anonymity may refer to the fact that the saying has no specifically identified author, but it does not speak to the saying. Merleau-Ponty stated: "Dans l'objet culturel, j'éprouve la présence prochaine d'autrui sous le voile de l'anonymat" (1945, p. 400). His comment is in keeping with the above interpretation of anonymity in the sense that it further enhances the alleged misconception of impersonalness, but he uses the word "un voile," a word which throws a whole new light on the subject. Anonymity is a veil, an opaqueness that serves to mislead one into thinking that the nonpersonal is also the noncommon. Impersonal is not noncommon; it is a distance taking from the I and the personal, but the common in the world is always present.

A second example will contribute to further understanding of the nonpersonal as common. Nemerov (1978) attempts to illustrate the proverb "The exception is the rule" through an example drawn from the process of writing:

> Writers [...] are often afraid or embarrassed to put down something because it comes directly from our own life, and hence appears to you as too intimate, too idiosyncratic, too aesthetically inert, ever to illustrate any general nature in things. But if you overcome your timidity or shame and put it down anyhow, you will likely find that it puts you in filiations with the experience of others, the nature of life; it grows, in addition to its being a meaning, or several meanings. (p. 45)

His illustration points to what has been called the timidity of the I before the They but also to the process through which the I, mysteriously, in expression reaches commonness. Jason (1971, p. 620) identifies a similar process in proverb formation and the notion is recurrent in Hulme's (1932) words that "popularity is an essential feature" (p. 6) of proverb genesis. Commonness, like distanciation, is paradoxically an essential element of traditional sayings.

The notion of commonness presented in anonymity and in the writing process has been presented at the ontological level of being together. Through traditional sayings, the "oneness of humanity" is asserted (Hulme, 1932, p. 1), and it is a sense of belonging that answers to our participation in the world. They restore the We of life. At the epistemological level, commonness is named consensus.

From the etymology of the word, consensus displays feeling and thinking together: *com*, and *sentire*, feel and think. The passage from feeling, expressed as commonness, to thinking introduces traditional sayings as knowledge. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett stated that traditional sayings involved an "impersonal community *consensus*." She indicated that proverbs provide a range of agreements on objects of communication. Sayings display commonness because the users agree on the content. That they are seen as true is a truism in paroemiological research. Further to the truth statement, however, is the condition allowing for truth to emerge as truth.

Consensus, according to Farrell (1976), is also to be considered as "both a precondition and an outcome of communications" (p. 9). "Two heads are better than one" is the result of a linguistic act which, through personal experiences repeated many times, led to the acceptance of

the proverb as true. However, that we recognize the proverb as true presupposes a common orientation of knowledge. Hence, consensus is also a prior belonging together, a feeling together grounding a thinking together: "Two heads *are* better than one." Goodwin and Wenzel (1979) have investigated this phenomenon as socio-logic, and they found that sayings display remarkable affinities with principles of logic. Their argument furthers the above notion of consensus in that the "nature of rationality is socially based" (p. 290). Knowledge is then grounded in social conditions and consensus:

> The motive power of reasoning may be an individual's striving for cognitive consistency, and the techniques employed may include some formal rules, but their ultimate source and sanction is the experience of a community of persons thinking and acting together over time. (p. 289)

The Okpoto people of Ghana have a saying that states: "Buttocks do not before the head enter the house" (Sheldon, 1971, p. 46). Emanating from an observation of everyday familiarity, it reflects a sanctioning of social hierarchy where everyone has his or her place. The saying is possible and accepted only because it represents part of the social logic of behaviour: the head, or the chief of the clan, deserves respect. This respect is demonstrated by allowing him or her the first place, literally, in entering through a door, or in the various ritual and social activities of the clan. The social logic allows for the consensus to occur. Our culture may find reasons why the head should not enter the door first. For example, we may say "Women and children first," in the evacuation of a disaster area, assuming that the strongest should exhibit courage and "enter" last. Or, someone may open a door and say: "Beauty before age." In this case, beauty is given apparent precedence in social status although it is only a momentary status. It is understood that age should go first but, in this case, an exception is made: "Beauty before age."

The precondition and the result of agreement that consensus displays add another dimension to the position that traditional sayings do not only present a separation between I and They, but they express the commonness of a We.

Traditional sayings have been examined: first, from the explanations given by paroemiologists. These expressed primarily a distinction between I and They. At the same

time, however, issues such as authorship, the writing process, and consensus led to a sense of belonging together that restore the I and They dialectic of impersonalness within a perspective of the We. Objectifications and impersonalness are such only for explanation. When the explanatory rhetoric is reinterpreted, it discloses a powerful sense of belonging that was heretofore absent. Now, the second characteristic of traditional sayings as objectification, that of stability, will be reviewed.

3. The characteristics of stability

Objectifications are directly linked to transmission since, in order to be transmitted, to be given, something has to take the form of an object, of a sign, of a word. Objectifications, while they are products of human activities, become detached from the original author, audience, and situation. They survive space, time, and social dimensions. Traditional sayings are such fixed linguistic objects that have the enduring power of objectifications. Being autonomous from space, time, and situation, they acquire stability. They are fixed in form and in content. Since they are fixed, paroemiologists view them as conservative, stable, and unchangeable.

Traditional sayings, as objects, are relatively fixed although innovations, over time, have been witnessed for most sayings. Over long periods of time, they undergo changes that modify their form and their meaning to the changing needs, perspectives, and views of life. For example, the proverb "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" (Taylor, 1962, p. 22) has been subjected to many variations. In 1562 John Heywood quoted it as "A birde in the hand is worth ten in the wood." An older form is "A birde in hand is better than three in the wode" (Taylor, p. 23). The Latin form of the saying was "*Una avis in laqueo plus valet octo vagis,*" that is, "A bird in the snare is worth more than eight flying." Variations of the saying are found in many European countries:

Portugal: Better a sparrow in the hand than two flying.

Finland: Better one bird in the pot than ten in the wood.

Germany: Better a sparrow in the hand than a crane on the roof.

Spain: A sparrow in the hand is worth a vulture flying.

Italy: A finch in the hand is better than a thrush afar off.

Romania: Better a bird in the hand than a thousand on the house. (Taylor, pp. 22-24)

Strictly speaking then, traditional sayings are not immutable. However, Kunzle (1978) and McKenna (1974) argue that their social function as objectifications is to be guided by a goal of immutability, by conservatism.

Conservatism

First, traditional sayings are said to present a conservative approach to life. Loux and Richard (1978) in their study of sayings related to the body conclude that the advice given is one of moderation in all matters:

> Quand les proverbes donnent des conseils, ces conseils s'organisent autour de la notion de modération, clef du discours proverbial qui bâtit ainsi toute une théorie de la prévention par le respect de l'univers. (p. 9)

Through respect for the universe as it exists, sayings advise a mode of behaviour that will not upset the balance achieved. Such an approach is qualified today as conservative; it adheres to, and aims at, preserving the existing order of things. Hence "Petit train va loin" advises moderation. It tells us that by advancing slowly, as the hare did, goals are achieved. It does not admonish us to move quickly, to keep up with change and progress. No, it preaches moderation. It reflects a view that a slow pace permits the adjustments that will be necessary along the way, and it advances a view that human action should always respect the world.

Social legitimation

Secondly, and more precisely, traditional sayings are thought to reflect a conservative social view. They may have served to legitimate the establishment and the status quo. In a study contrasting proverbs and World Upside Down prints in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Kunzle concludes:

> The WUD print recognizes social contradiction and conflict that the proverb tries to mask. The proverb of the early capitalist era, like its late capitalist equivalent, the political and advertising slogan, *presents readily understood, and often craftily formulated, moral and social catchphrases*. (1978, p. 74, emphasis added)

World Upside Down prints (WUD) appeared in the form of what we would today call cartoons. In sketchy drawings, they reversed the established order and presented, for example, hay chasing a horse, a lady following a servant, an ass riding a miller, an ox driving a man at plough, a rabbit hunting a human. Kunzle associates WUD to the strong popular unrest of the time while he claims that traditional sayings, mostly proverbs, accept the world as it is and accomodate the hierarchy of the day. He attributes the proliferation of proverb collections in the second half of the sixteenth century, for example, to the needs of a newly established bourgeoisie for reinforcing the status quo. Proverbs were the major vehicle of moral regulation. The social wisdom of traditional sayings was then seen as a pacifier. Traditional sayings, according to this view, served to perpetuate the status quo.

An example addressing this view of traditional sayings is the following quoted in Tordoir (1972):

> Il faut laisser le moutier où il est.(p. 76)

The word "moutier," along with "moustier," "monstier," and "mostier," is an ancient variation for the word "monastery" (Greimas, 1968, p. 427). In *Le grand testament* de Villon (1960), written in 1461-1462, the expression is not taken literally:

> Laissons le moustier ou il est;
> Parlons de chose plus plaisante:
> Ceste matiere a tous ne plaist,
> Ennuyeuse est et desplaisante. (p. 43)

The saying is here a way of closing a discussion, of changing the topic of conversation. Tordoir (p. 76) notes the same meaning given by Gaguin in 1416 and Monsieur d'Angoulême in 1540 and 1548. However, in the seventeenth century, the saying is interpreted in direct relation with the Church. It means that nothing must be changed in the Church's ancient laws. Pasquier, cited in Tordoir, specifies that this conversatism in the Church must also be applied to common law and generally to all laws. Hence, here is a saying which exemplifies the point

made by Kunzle that sayings are inherently conservative of the social status quo. The power to be protected, the Church, is supported by the vision and the literal interpretation of words of the saying, "Il faut laisser le moutier où il est." Furthermore, this example expresses the hardening of a position when faced by change. When we consider that the wind of Reformation swayed Europe and that in the light of the counter-reformation the Catholic Church attempted to regain authority and domination (Dupâquier & Lachiver, 1976, p. 54), it is not surprising that the interpretation of the saying came to be taken literally: not to question the Church, the supreme authority.

But, the very notion of transmission demands a consideration of the status quo since it is what already exists, what was previously sanctioned. The status quo is recognized as the good, the appropriate, or true situation to be passed on. Transmission expresses a respect for the world as it is and demands an adaptive quality from individuals. Underlying this notion of transmission is a view that all is well. To this option we must oppose the contemporary valuing of change, where the situation, not the individual, should be adapted.

Traditional sayings are thought to be disappearing or being modified. To pose the survival of traditional sayings as a problem indicates a sense of discrepancy between status quo and change. The twentieth century is an era of amazing changes. We witness enormous technological advances. Progress has become an integral part of our vision of history. In a changing world, the nature of objectifications is also changing. Maurice Blosch notes that in political states where "leaders are continually dependent on their manipulation and are at every moment challenged" (1974, p. 60) formalization of language such as traditional sayings is much less prevalent than in societies where traditional authority is stable. The twentieth century questions the importance and the survival of traditional sayings since their nature as objectification and their characteristic of stability is in apparent conflict with the prevalent changing life.

The old saying "Commend not your wife, wine, nor horse" (Wilson, 1970, p. 134) establishes the proper order for men's possessions and gives advice on the proper attitude for

retaining them. As a woman, I am well placed to feel the convervatism and status quo embedded in the saying. The saying directly elaborates a net to keep wives, wine, and horses in their proper place. It proffers stability by the transmission of values of social order. It is a legitimating tool. Contemporary consciousness, however, demands that progress lead to a more emancipated perspective of the status quo. It would demand the disappearance of the saying, at least in this particular form. In the desire for change lies a sense of power that, through human endeavours things can change, particularly the cultural world. The saying "Commend not your wife, wine, nor horse" could now lead the evolutionary forces of change but in the past, it perpetuated the status quo.

Traditional sayings present a view of order and of the status quo that the contemporary world challenges. Social and technological progress, as constant change leading to the ideal of a better world, opposes moderation and respect for the equilibrium achieved between humanity and nature. On the one hand, humans and the universe are separate. Humans operate on nature and on the world to control and bring them under human design. On the other hand, a respect of the universe, the established order, nature, proposes that humans are part of the world and that their actions have repercussions on themselves and the whole universe. Through the notion of change, two radically different approaches are witnessed. The opposition progress-tradition in the problem of disappearance of traditional sayings finds its root in change and transmission.

Competition

Stability within the social realm is qualified by McKenna (1974) as the expression of winners:

> The proverb *expresses the values of the winners*, the survivors, not the losers, and is more frequently interested in *prudence* than in compassion. It is an unduly conspirational view to speak of the proverb as part of the establishmentarian plot, but it does tend to support the status quo, playing one of the roles of a sort of living mythology. Thus the proverb is the encapsulated expression of a successful ancestral tradition that enjoys cultural stability. (p. 381, emphasis added)

McKenna's interpretation is interesting because it presses the opposition of stability versus

change into the arena of competition. Sayings are stable and serve to conserve the status quo. However, as expressions, they are the words that have survived; they are the expressions of survivors. By introducing competition, McKenna re-establishes the poles of I and They. He places I versus They: there are losers and there are survivors. His opinion, marked, as today is, with the biological evolution theory of Darwin, completely severs the world from humans and humans from each other. The belonging, the We-ness discovered earlier in sayings is completely absent from this perspective. The use of traditional sayings becomes a game of competition where the winner gets to become status quo.

The characteristic of stability has brought traditional sayings to the threshold of the contemporary world. A divergence of basic approach to stability has been noticed. It parallels the dichotomy of I and They. Traditional sayings and the reinterpretation to which paroemiology was submitted signifies some consequences for pedagogy.

4. The pedagogical dilemma

Objectifications, by their very characteristics of nonpersonalness and stability, provide objects of human action that transcend their origins and survive space, time, and social dimensions. In their detachability, they provide an enduring power to, in this case, traditional sayings. The contemporary notion of objectification is that the world is separated in portions: humans as I and They, the universe as I and It. The struggle is a competition between the two poles thus posited. Madeleine Grumet places the dilemma in the following way:

> Our pedagogical dilemma is to rescue the forms of knowledge from the autonomous life they assume and to make them the grounds for our action rather than our acquiescence. (1978, p. 39)

To her, the problem is how does pedagogy bring objectifications to the total lives of humans? How are objectifications placed in a larger context than the context of other objectifications (epistemological acquiescence)?

From the above reinterpretation of traditional sayings, three responses are suggested. First, objectifications are necessary, and we constantly return to them in knowledge. The

importance is, then, not to bring them to action but to establish a constant dialectic between objectification and life, between, in personal terms, the I and the They.

Secondly, there is a need for restoring the We at the heart of the objectifications. It is through objectifications that I 's meet. They are the very condition of intersubjectivity. Otherwise communication would be strictly proportionate to empathy. Through access to the nonpersonal, the We is founded. The objectification itself contains the We through generalized expression of personal experience. It is then a pedagogical task to point to the We-ness in objectifications. This We is the most forgotten dimension of objectifications.

Thirdly, objectifications are never the grounds for our acquiescence only. In saying a proverb, the proverb itself is not intact any more. It has changed in the saying because it has been reinserted in time, space, and a social situation. The stability of traditional sayings is constantly altered. But this stability is itself the condition for change. As an example, the case of the poet Emily Dickinson is interesting. Her use of traditional knowledge and traditional sayings was a condition for her artistic creativity as it is for all poets, writers, and even all of us. Barnes (1979) reminds us that:

> Emily Dickinson was a woman for whom the weight of tradition was often unbearable. In its various guises, but especially in that of New England Calvinism, traditional authority seems to have left its mark upon her personality. Yet as numerous biographers and critics have demonstrated, tradition was also a major source of strength for her as a creative artist; it brought to the poet much that was to prove indispensable to the development and sustenance of her own uniquely individual tasks. (p. 238)

In the stability of tradition lies the seed for individuality. Change is always a process relative to stability. Hence, the following conclusions can be reached:

1) It is nonsensical to speak of the disappearance of traditional sayings because, in one way or another, a stable form has to precede change. Traditional sayings, although the specific genre may vary, are always a point of departure. Similarly, pedagogy is grounded in the constant shift between stability and progress, learned and learning.

2) Objectifications are always subject to innovations and, on a minute scale, every time an objectification is picked up, it is changed somewhat. Pedagogy need not be

concerned about shifting acquiescence to action but rather about valuing and unfolding the unique innovation every action (saying) brings.

Finally, it must be stated that the word "objectification" affords a grasping of a phenomenon of exterior objects presented in the form of traditional sayings. However, the very language we use distances us from experience. That distance displays its importance. The danger comes when the language itself fools us into believing in the absolute autonomy of objectifications. It is then forgotten that objectifications were created by individuals like us, who did so aided by the grounds they held in common with other humans. It is also forgotten that the term "objectification" is only a relative approximation of nonpersonalness and stability, since each, in turn, can be returned to its opposite: personalness and change. The experience is in the dialectic. It is then appropriate to terminate the discussion of this section by Schutz's definition of objectification although he calls it sedimentation:

> Man in daily life [...] finds at any given moment a stock of knowledge at hand that serves him as a scheme of interpretation of his past and present experiences, and also determines his anticipation of things to come. This stock of knowledge has its particular history. It has been constituted in and by previous experiencing activities of our consciousness, the outcome of which has now become our habitual possession. Husserl, in describing the constituting process that is here involved, speaks graphically of the "sedimentation" of meaning. (1970, p. 74)

The next section will recapitulate the notions presented above through the experience of a saying.

5. Know Thyself: an example and a conclusion

"Know Thyself." As the words penetrate, a power of authority is felt in a kind and benevolent dominance. The words speak more powerfully than I, the speaker. I am inserted in tradition: a concoction of past minds. Like many watchful eyes whispering a silent message, tradition is deposited, stirred, and silted before us. The Yoruba disciplinarian, always the man, excuses his demonstration of love after disciplining through the proverb, "If a man beats his child with his right hand, he should draw him to himself with his left." He is extracting his parental imperative and projecting it on a past, which on first reaction seems anonymous. It is

not the parent who speaks and directs action but the "One," the "Elders," the They. The magnitude of the world of the They seems so vast. The They is solid against an I, and timidly the I acknowledges the blinding power. The confusedness of the individual perspective is channelled by tradition, and "Know Thyself" is like a signpost, a lighthouse dispelling the shadows. Yet, when left unmanipulated instrumentally, the power of authority feels kind and gentle. The saying leads the way, "Know Thyself," as the Greek slave led the child to school. The power illuminates the events of life with a kind directiveness. Wise old people stand by the wayside nodding to the test of life. We shall not go astray; power and authority, through traditional sayings, are a distillation of wisdom, of knowing guides.

"Know Thyself" is an extraction and an icon of a body of knowledge which pre-dates us. It becomes a part and an example of a vision of the world that we were, or are, pulled into. "Know Thyself" solicits entrance into a mode of seeing the world and ourselves that tradition has given and that allows for interpretation. When Saint-Bernard, in the twelfth century, reinterpreted the saying as "Whoever teaches himself could have an idiot for a teacher" (Lettres, LXXXIII), he was referring to "Thyself" as a psychological, individual entity to which he opposed an exterior, spiritual Teacher. Saint-Bernard's words draw into a mode of thought primordially facing a higher being as an exterior Consciousness. On the other hand, an animistic view would comprehend "Thyself" not as a restrictive unit but as an embodiment of a superior Being animating each individual; self knowledge would become knowledge of the universe. Here, "Thy" connotes religious parlance and inserts into a vision of humans in relation to a higher Being.

Yet, to speak of They, of Others, of Elders, of tradition, as exterior and as pulling us to an here-to-unknown body of knowledge denigrates our living of tradition. Although it lies in the powerful, directive realm of idealities, as a grammar, tradition has no life other than the one you and I give it. "Know Thyself" resonates within us as in an echoing cathedral. We are not ignorant of the ancient dwelling of words and of their vision of the world. Someone, just like us, has one day proferred the words, and vaguely the brainchild of one and all, the motto

has been inscribed on the walls of the temple of Apollo. It has been repeated by many and every time a tradition echoed. The complicity of the They in the formulation of the saying is also our complicity for "we are all in this together."

D. The expression of a world through traditional sayings

While the previous section of this chapter dealt primarily with transmission through the notion of objectification, the second part will focus on the nature of tradition. The leading question is: what kind of world do traditional sayings express? In other words, what is tradition? First, the stock of knowledge presented by traditional sayings will be examined. Secondly, the stock of knowledge will be studied through the notion of world view. Thirdly, authority will be questioned in its relation to ideology.

1. The stock of knowledge of traditional sayings

Traditional sayings are part of a "stock of knowledge at hand that serves [...] as a scheme of interpretation of past and present experiences and also determines anticipations of things to come" (Schutz, 1970, p. 74). This section begins where the previous one left off: traditional sayings as a stock of knowledge. Two features of this stock of knowledge can be identified: a system of interests and a practical knowledge.

As a system of interests

First, the traditional sayings of a culture, if they could be taken as an agglomeration, would serve to indicate what, for a people, is problematic and what can remain unquestioned. As a system of interests, sayings indicate the perspective of a group. Some ethnographic studies have attempted to divulge the world view of a culture through the sayings. Zenner (1973) studied the stereotyping view adopted by the Lebanese in their proverbs. He described the images Arabs have of Moslems, Christian, Jews, Shiites, and Druzes. Shimkin and Sanjuan (1953), similarly but more comprehensively, codified three dimensions of socio-cultural elements through proverbs: "visualized patterns of social relations,"

"philosophical orientation," and "system of logical and perceptual organization" in pre-revolutionary Russia:

> The present study suggests an approach to the delineation of the major attitudes and psycho-dynamic patterns common to relatively homogeneous communities through a systematic analysis of proverbs. (p. 345)

Thus, by assigning values to sayings, Shimkin and Sanjuan propose the general philosophy of the Russian people. They interpret the saying "If you see the moon at new moon from the left, (then) accidents or bad luck (will come)" (p. 340) as a negative mythological reference to the act of seeing. Similarly, "Beautiful but not a summer, kind but not a mother" (p. 339) is interpreted as a positive reference to women and mothers. Through descriptive and evaluative adjectives, it elaborates on mother-child affective relationships. On the whole, Russian sayings are seen to exhibit the following philosophy in the three areas delimited:

> The philosophy of all three areas is marked by negativism, fatalism, and pessimism. Yet all believe in a strongly beneficient God, in love above hatred, and in piety over ungodliness. Also, wealth and property uniformly receive more attention than poverty. [...] Wealth and poverty seem to be dominant pre-occupations; magnanimity, avarice, justice, and injustice are ethical problems of no concern. (pp. 343-344)

Shimkin and Sanjuan propose the above as one interpretation of the Russian world view as established through traditional sayings.

The above research takes seriously the premise of the sociology of knowledge that patterns and objectifications of intellectual life, including modes of knowing, are in dialectical relation to the social processes and structures (Becker & Dahlke, 1942). The sayings are thought to represent questions of importance in the culture. This representation is indeed a presentation; that is, a corpus of sayings is like a grammar of values. But it is the culture and its individuals which create the values, not the sayings. Similar situations elicit similar reactions and sustain analogous sayings, each according to the cultural code of each group (Rodegem, 1972, p. 687). Thus the medieval proverb, "Oignez vilain Il vous poindra" (Rodegem, p. 687) is solicited from a similar situation in the Rundi people: "Si l'on enseigne à un manant (hutu) à tirer à l'arc, il vous enverra une flèche dans le ventre" (Rodegem, p. 687). Both sayings refer to the ingratitude that often meets good deeds. But each saying is couched

in a particular cultural imagery and language. The point is here that specific cultural (ethnic) sayings represent a disposition towards the world, sum up an attitude or value. Studies of a corpus of sayings are enlightening for decoding a culture. Moreover, such decoding often brings to light the similarities between cultures. However, caution must be exerted since such a perspective is a narrow illustration of traditional sayings in that it remains at the conceptual level of a structure.

Knowledge is not merely a conceptual (linguistic) structure but a human activity. Traditional sayings not only express the past and present interests of a people, but also those of the speaker and audience. Hence, traditional sayings, as a system, display a layer of meanings inlaid with tendencies (identified as interests) but they are also laden with the usage situation. Knowledge and, thus, tradition in sayings is a dialectic between social and historical constructs and a usage situation. Knowledge is in Dick's terms:

> Created by past and present generations, inlaid with strata of meaning which we learn to reactivate and interpret in original ways, finding new sense in the old, and old sense in the new. (quoted in Giroux, 1979, p. 36)

Hence, the stock of knowledge in traditional sayings reflects the cultural life of a people, but the equation must not be drawn between the two. Although the knowledge present is, in part, culturally and historically determined, its totality is never restricted to culture and history.

For example, one of the sayings used by Bruegel in his 1559 painting entitled *The Netherlandish Proverbs* is: "To throw roses (pearls) to the swines" (Foote, 1971). It uses figures that were common to everyday life: swines and roses. On this subject, Anne B. Rooth (1968) concludes that 83 per cent of the English proverbs found in collections use domestic animals as images. According to her, a culture uses objects with which it is familiar and with which it has contact in daily life. The English culture was agrarian based and historically this has remained in its stock of proverbs. Similarly, Bruegel in his time used images with which they, or their ancestors, were familiar in daily life. The images are culturally and historically determined. Furthermore, the saying indicates an interest that responds to the sixteenth-century perspective of the world and to the other sayings illustrated in the painting.

It is an interest in establishing an order for things and humans where balance and harmony are achieved. It is part of human folly to place the wrong values on things: to give the most beautiful flower, a rose, as feed to a glutonous animal, which in the action of devouring will not appreciate the difference between a blade of grass, a potato peel, or a rose. The main interest of the saying, as part of a perspective of the world, is to tell humans that the true appreciations of things has to be acquired from God. For Bruegel, God assigns the right value to the elements of the world. Humans are foolish because they do not have a sense of the proper value of things.

The very same saying was often used more than five centuries later by an English teacher who deplored the inability of students to assign proper values to forms of language expressions. She often viewed her teaching of poetry to high school students as "Throwing pearls to the swines." As a stock of knowledge, the saying permitted the reactivation of historically and culturally determined images and interests. There is an intuitive sense that the pearls and the swines still present an opposition that is deeply understood. Furthermore, her interest was to speak of humans', in this case young human's folly. Contemporary perspective, however, demands that God may not be viewed as the best agent to impress the proper values to the world. It is rather the task of education and more precisely of the English teacher to inculcate proper values of language expression. The saying of tradition amounted to an acknowledgement of failure where a teacher should have been able to shape proper valuing.

The above example, thus far, makes explicit the equation between culture and history on the one hand and the interests presented in the saying on the other. It shows that sayings, as a stock of knowledge, are responsive to socio-historical conditions. But what tradition as a stock of knowledge also contains is, in Schutz's words, "the anticipation of things to come." Tradition contains some interests to the exclusion or the nonconsideration of others, but it only contains in potential the future usage to which it will be put. The saying "To throw pearls to the swine" contains specific interests, but it only expresses in potential the usage; the above English teacher has put it to actualization. The teacher-student-school context is new to the

stock of knowledge and yet it is not foreign to it. Thus tradition, in sayings, is a system of interests. It includes the past interests of culture and history and is grounded in the present interest of usage.

As practical knowledge

The second feature of tradition as a stock of knowledge is its "down to earth" practical nature. Paroemiologists speak of traditional sayings as offering a stock of knowledge that they describe with heterogeneous terms:

> Traditional sayings are recipe knowledge. (Hulme, 1932, pp. 3-17)
>
> Proverbs provide practical recipes for coping with situations, because they offer ready-made solutions to the problems faced. (Schutz, 1970)
>
> Proverbs which have a way of being *antiscientific* and *antipoetic* at the same time, nevertheless have a certain *practical* shrewdess to them which we need not dignify with the name of wisdom, but to which we ought to pay some attention. (Nemerov, 1978, p. 42)
>
> [Proverbs offer] the transmission of sound wisdom and working common sense. (Hulme, 1932, p. 3)
>
> Ripened with age and passed the troublesome experimental stage proverbs remained a storehouse of practical wisdom. (Hulme, 1932, p. 20)

The emphasis of researchers, when speaking about traditional sayings as a stock of knowledge, is that they are practical. What does practical indicate in this context?

The road traced by knowledge in traditional sayings begins in experience, as Milner noticed:

> It is vivid, homely, sometimes coarse. It deals with man's (and woman's) primary interests: loving and fighting; health and sickness; age and youth; food and hunger; work, play and rearing of children. (1969a, p. 199)

I would like to show at this point that what has been seen as practical wisdom by paroemiologists is what Ricoeur has called "ethical truth."

In 1951, Ricoeur identified three types of truth: existential, scientific, and ethical. Existential truth is "la puissance de conviction qui émane de ce monde perçu par une communauté d'hommes" (p. 756). Traditional sayings are rooted in this truth that speaks to perception and experience as in the proverb "Quand la poire est mûre, il faut qu'elle tombe" (Maloux, 1960, p. 334). It is the subjective level. The second type of truth, the scientific, reduces cultural objects and perceptions to a universal, objective statement. It sees the world as a "spectacle pour notre entendement." It is a contemplative truth. The pear, which was observed in experience, becomes a symbol for the inevitability of events. It must be noticed that although Nemerov calls traditional sayings antiscientific, they are not nonscientific. As an example, a study of Chinese weather proverbs by Nai-Yung-Ting (1972) concludes that proverbs "as crystalization of centuries of experience are more reliable than the predictions of an imported science" (p. 649). In fact, out of a corpus of 408 proverbs, only 15 per cent could not be justified in terms of modern science. Traditional sayings, although they appear to be nonscientific, are not in opposition to scientific truth. However, they appear as "anti-scientific" because they are ethical truths.

Ethical truth, according to Ricoeur, is the third level of a mutually responsive domain of truths. Ethical truth is the domain of action where the truth expressed requires that action be directed in this or that direction: "C'était comme la réplique pratique de cet ordre qui 'oblige' la pensée: le ciel étoilé au-dessus de nos têtes et la loi morale dans notre coeur" (p. 759). Within the saying "To kill the goose that lays the golden egg" (Wilson, 1970, p. 422) is a direction for action. It is perhaps less forceful here than in "Do well and have well" (Wilson, p. 192), but it is nonetheless present. The statement about the killing of the goose tells that action must not be seen in the short term only. It also warns against desiring more than one has the good luck of having; it tells not to look for the mine of gold (inside the goose's belly) but rather to be content with the daily benefits. The saying directs action into moderation. The saying directs response. While scientific knowledge is not neutral, it is essentially a contemplation of the order of the universe. Conversely, ethical truth provides guides for

action and reaction as exigencies. Kenneth Burke (1969), when he spoke of traditional sayings as "equipment for life" and as "strategies for handling existential moments," was referring to their capacity to prefigure responses. However, to go beyond the anthropological truism that different languages define the character of reality in different ways, the nature of a stock of knowledge has to be recalled. It is not only a scheme of interpretation but also a scheme of anticipations, not determinations.

The words "Once upon a time" create a mood of reception to fantastic tales. The saying predisposes the accepting of unrealistic elements and events. They are "practical" in the sense that no transposition between an abstract statement (or action) is necessary. The statement implies the action, but it is there as a choice, not a command. Traditional sayings are often descriptive: "Man proposes, God disposes." But, even the sayings that take the form of a command are conducive to choices. "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" is a guide for action; it is not a restrictive, all or nothing command although it uses the imperative mode.

The stock of knowledge presented by traditional sayings has two dominant features. It is a system of interests, and care must be taken to interpret interests in an existential as well as a structural (cultural and historical) scheme of interpretation. Secondly, it has been shown that traditional sayings present a truth that could be called ethical in that it is directly related to action. This is a reinterpretation of the commonly used phrase "practical knowledge." The moment has come to shift the above discussion on the stock of knowledge to its distinctive elements. The question becomes: What kind of a world do traditional sayings divulge?

2. The world divulged by traditional sayings

Traditional sayings, seen from the point of view of knowledge, introduce an ethical dimension that takes the form of anticipation to action. The present section will press further this approach by enlarging the frame of reference to the world of saying, beyond the knowledge of sayings. Discontinuity and appeal to the unconscious will lead to a reformulation of the notion of "world view."

First, traditional sayings are discrete items: that is, singly or in group, they do not formulate in themselves a total perspective of the world (McKenna, 1974, p. 387). They form a disparate group where some sayings contradict each other. Many examples can be found of sayings contradicting each other:

> Une attitude conservatrice, un "juste milieu" sont en outre des caractères communs aux proverbes de toutes les nations, et si tel précepte suggère directement ou indirectement le dynamisme, tel autre prêche une attitude contraire: "Qui risque rien n'a rien et qui n'a rien ne risque rien" mais "Qui risque tout perd tout." Bref, "dans le doute abstiens-toi" a toujours tendance ici à prévaloir sur toute autre attitude. (DesRuisseaux, 1978, p. 16)

This does not mean that through a logical system the sayings of a culture could not be interpreted within a rational framework. Seitel (1974) and Loux and Richard (1978) have shown the coherence and unity, despite contradictions, of the proverbial speech. What it means, however, is that in themselves, traditional sayings are not a logical system of explanations of the world. They are a heterogenous group of discrete items that express specific comments about aspects of the world: "les proverbes donnent peu de conseils, ils établissent un ordre des choses, ils disent comment les choses sont, libre à chacun de s'y conformer" (Loux & Richard, 1978, p. 225). In this sense, traditional sayings are not scientific explanations.

The appeal to the unconscious

Secondly, traditional sayings, although they may be placed into words of reason, appeal to the unconscious. Although it can be explained rationally, the first impact of the saying "Qui partage le miel avec l'ours a la plus petite part" (Maloux, 1960, p. 396) is unconscious. The whole person enters into the saying and gets a feeling of sharing honey with a bear. The whole situation is rather amusing, and one can fantasize tricking a bear in order to obtain a small share of honey. We almost become a smaller animal, "weaseling" around the large one. It is at this first level that the saying is understood. Quickly, though, the rational explanation comes to us: the less powerful obtain the smallest share in any situation of competition. There is a sense of pleasure in reading the Swahili proverb: "Climbing a thorn tree, coming down is a

dance"(Scheven, 1981, p. 150). Because the saying is new, we can feel the initial unconscious partaking in the saying. We climb the tree, come down, and wonder how it is interpreted. Understanding comes: yes, when one does something in anger or haste, one may find that one is in an awkward situation. The saying was like a riddle to us. Milner corroborates the appeal to the unconscious in this way:

> I should like to suggest that traditional sayings share this incommunicable quality with language-based jokes. Apart, that is to say, from the context, they depend, like jokes, for their full effect on an appeal to the unconscious level of our minds. Just as we do not have to think about a joke because it is processed automatically, laughter being produced almost before we are fully aware of what has been said, so the use of the right proverb in the right context and in the right situation can often have an immediate automatic effect, and the proverb can be put to use, of course, in order to persuade someone to do something, or not to do something. (1969b, p. 380)

According to DesRuisseaux (1978, p. 13) this primary appeal to the unconscious before the rational is what makes all efforts of definitions of traditional sayings a futile endeavour.

The shift of perspective: from a world view to an ethical world

Traditional sayings are often associated with the introduction into a world view. Some even see them as "portable paradigms" (Barley, 1972, p. 740). Such an approach offers a fixed vision of traditional sayings and it uses the word "paradigm" in the sense given to it by the structural linguist Vladimir Propp: "the paradigmatic axis refers to abstract categories according to which syntagms are understood and interpreted" (in Barley, 1972). Traditional sayings are here considered as an abstract "grammar" of usage. It makes them static explanations that are picked up and reactivated by usage. This view ultimately means that traditional sayings transform chaos and order the world into a product of human reason. I would now like to argue against this view.

Traditional sayings have here been seen as appealing to the unconscious, as a disparate group of statements, as anticipating action and reactions, and as a system of interests (not rationalizations). These four aspects of tradition in sayings ward off a static, contemplative and excusively rational world of sayings. Loux and Richard say:

> Il ne faut pas chercher dans les proverbes et sans doute plus particulièrement quand ils sont relatifs au corps, un reflet totalement fidèle de la façon dont on vivait à la fin du

> XIXe siècle. Ils formulent plutôt une *éthique*, une *vision du monde qui possède sa propre logique, dont la cohérence avec la vie pratique, si elle est certaine n'est pas toujours directe*. Le champ sémantique du corps et de son symbolisme, de sa vulnérabilité et de sa disparition nous entraîne sans doute au delà des *nuances historiques* et des rapports avec la pratique, dans le lieu de crainte et d'une anxiété qui sont peut-être invariantes chez tout homme sous des dehors différents et variés selon les cultures. (1978, p. 8, emphasis added)

They point out, in *résumé*, the distinctions made between cultural and historical determinism and the new interpretation that is added to the stock of knowledge. They also allude to the fact that the realm of sayings is different from the realm of logic per se. What they do is introduce the emotional domain as background to the saying thus making the link between the ethical statement and its existential source. There is a wholeness to the world of traditional sayings that must be preserved.

A shift of traditional sayings, tradition and knowledge, from a world view to an ethical world will now be affected. The notion of world view is essentially contemplative (Merchant, 1980). The world is viewed, seen, as it were, through the eyes and reason. The expression "world view" is itself revealing in that it expresses a viewing as if through a window. As Heidegger points out in "The age of the world view" (1979), the expression "world view" is symptomatic of a particular attitude to life and knowledge (p. 10). The world, or the "existent," as he calls all that exists, is "viewed" as a picture to be painted and explained by the subject, by the being who is central to the world.

> The existent as a whole is now so understood that it is existent when and only when and in the degree to which it is held at bay by the person who represents and establishes it. (Heidegger, 1979, p. 10)

The world is looked upon through a window and re-presented: that is, placed as present as something to be acted upon and deciphered in relation to oneself.

According to Heidegger, the notion of world view speaks to us about the essence of the modern world. The saying "Seeing is believing" will serve here as an example to probe this notion. Alan Dundes (1980) in his excellent interpretation of the proverb "Seeing is believing" attempts to establish the priority of sight in contemporary, Western culture, particularly in the English speaking world. Vision is given primacy in establishing truth and knowledge. To see is

to perceive what is truth and existing. If seeing and hearing are compared, we get: "Believe nothing of what you hear and only half of what you see." Although a warning against sight is effected in this saying, it is still half more reliable than hearing. Sight is generally the sense that is named first when naming the five senses (Dundes, 1980, p. 86). Many other English expressions corroborate the primacy of sight. The metaphorical use of sight is an added evidence of this. For example, we speak of "*seeing* the point of an argument," we accept different "points of *view*," we introduce our opinions by "as I *see* it," or "It all depends on how you *look* at it." In court "*hear*say" is not considered reliable evidence while "*eye*witnesses" will offer acceptable testimonies. Research insists on "participant observation" to gain "in*sights*" into the "world *views*" of other cultures, or when inter*views* are conducted. Informally, greetings and taking leaves will be formulated in this way: "*See* you around," "I'll be *seeing* you," "It's good to *see* you" (why not "It's good to hear, smell or feel you"?). Finally, sight is the seat of belief: "I'll believe it when I *see* it," "That I've got to *see*," "I can't *picture* that," "I couldn't believe my *eyes*" and "It is out of *sight*" to mean "incredible." In conclusion, the expression "Seeing is believing" is an example expressing a tendency to give primacy to sight and consequently, to see the universe and humans as subjects of observations, as objects of which to draw pictures.

The above presented the modern emphasis on sight and served to illustrate the emphasis surrounding the expression "world view." However, history tells a different tale. Dundes (1980, p. 89) and Taylor (1962, p. 32) indicate that the original form of the saying was "Seeing is believing but feeling is the truth." In effect the original saying expressed the contrary to the current emphasis on sight. By favouring feeling, the saying is restoring links between the world and the human being. The world is once again inhabited rather than contemplated. The world here is present as much as the person and therefore cannot become a view. Similarly, traditional sayings do not present a world view, nor are they paradigms. Instead, they offer an ethical world, a world that is inhabited by humans. This world contains, in and by its presence, a direction for action. It must be recalled that the contrast between world view and

ethical world is the direction for action. A world view solicits action upon the world while an ethical world names a restored copresence of world and human: action is no longer *upon* but directed from within both.

Traditional sayings as description, imagery, or commands are not separate "is" and "ought" statements. Each is contained within each other. Descriptive statements about the world can presuppose the normative; they are ethic-laden. Controlling images operate restraints as "oughts" or "ought-nots." As an example, the saying "Man proposes, God disposes" is a description of the world, but human beings are so intertwined in the description that norms for action are given. "Man proposes" delimits the human action of planning. The word Man situates within a patriarchal system when Man, with a capital letter, represents humankind and its genders. "God disposes" refers to a Christian world, and immediately a cultural orientation is conjured. If, when humans plan, a higher authority acts according to its own plan, the implications are clearly that planning is futile and that an attitude of humility must be adopted before a higher Power. "Man proposes, God disposes" is a description of what can be seen as a state of affairs. However, by placing men above women and God above humans, a hierarchy is established that already limits the choices in action: for example, it is futile for a woman to think that what she plans (and wants) may come to reality if God plans otherwise. Norms are then identified as appropriate for action: don't plan too much, don't count on plans, always think that there is a higher Power, let that higher Power guide you, etc. In the case of "Man proposes, God disposes," the norms primarily favour non-action and suggest the adoption of a "second rate citizen" attitude for women. In conclusion, the saying is not contemplative although it is a description. It is a guide for re-action, a guide through norms. Hence, traditional sayings do not present a world view for this is much too rational and contemplative a notion for them. Instead, traditional sayings offer an ethical world that we are invited to inhabit.

3. The world of authority

Through a grouping of discrete items and an appeal to the unconscious, but not exclusively reason, the world of traditional sayings has become an ethical world. The notion of world view has been seen as grounded in the importance of sight for knowledge while sayings appealed to the ethical as well as the knowledgeable mind. These follow a similar reinterpretation of the stock of knowledge as a practical system of interests. Pervasive to tradition is the notion that will now be addressed: authority.

Paroemiologists associate authority, tradition, status quo, and ideology:

> As the proverb speaks with a voice of authority, so the sense of its somewhat complacent morality is that it is a ruling class proverb, much concerned with keeping the status quo, no trifling discrepancy, it seems to say, is going to change *my* idea of the world. (Nemerov, 1978, p. 43)

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett also states:

> Proverbs sound authoritative. The truths they proclaim feel absolute. The impression is created by the proverb's traditionality and the weight of impersonal community consensus it invokes. (1973, p. 82)

The above two quotations express different kinds of authority.

Authority as truth from the past

The latter quotation brings authority to the Elders, the They, the great human beings the past has known. This authority is so because time has sanctioned its wisdom and truth. This authority is seen as the best to rule. It is a nondemocratic ideal based on an acquisition of knowledge that is not testable by all as in the scientific ideal. The authority is such because it knows and the others do not. An example can be taken from the Haya of Tanzania where "knowing" is intimately linked to speech and to social status. The truth of opinions is asserted by "a knower" by the insertion of *bilemgo*: that is, proverbs, sayings, quotations from songs, and tales (Seitel, 1974, p. 55). The artfulness of speech is measured by the number of references made to recognized sources of knowledge both situational or personal, like experiences in travel outside Buhaya or like the use of traditional language. Knowing is directly related to social status. A circle of knowledge is established between the knower who gains

status, and status itself allowing the expression of knowledge through speech. In the case of the Haya, we see an example of authority being intertwined with knowledge (wisdom) and speech. In this sense, authority stems from an exposition of truth and from the presentation of personal observation.

Authority, when exposition takes precedence, reflects an attitude towards knowledge that does not favour experimentation but instead forms belief in doctrine. The key issue is, as Heidegger puts it, "knowledge is here not research, but the correct understanding of the authoritative word and the authorities proclaiming it" (1979, pp. 5-6). Exegesis becomes the art of interpreting what is said with the caveat that the words of authority be undisputed. In contrast to contemporary interpretation, the Middle Ages gave this precedence to the authority of doctrine.

Another example of the authority of sayings is found in the experiences of Jean Paulhan as he learnt the Malgasy language. His feelings were that, although he had mastered vocabulary and syntax, his speech was lacking weight, or conviction as he puts it:

> Il manquait à mes paroles un certain poids, une valeur, un ton de conviction. [...] J'avais au contraire toutes raisons de supposer que l'autorité, dont je ressentais l'absence, était de nature extérieure...à l'intérieur de la langue commune.
>
> (1966, p. 101)

Although he could express himself, his words lacked the strength to be recognized by others. As he became more familiar with the Malgasy language, he realized the role proverbs played in speech. He tried to understand and use proverbs in many situations. Some of his efforts were failures. He relates the following:

> Rabe: "Comment veux-tu que je me défende contre ces gens-là? *Le boeuf mort ne se protège pas des mouches.*
>
> Je réponds:
>
> —Mais vous êtes un boeuf encore bien vivant, et solide.
>
> A quoi Rahaja, qui s'adresse à moi avec bienveillance, comme relevant une faute de goût:
>
> —Comment peux-tu appeler Rabe: boeuf?"(p. 106)

Gradually, however, he entered into the words of tradition and the usage, which was at first problematic for him, became a second nature. He was then in a position to reflect on the authoritative nature of the sayings. He then spoke of an assurance, a self-assurance, that proverbs gave him and his language. He was overpowered by the truth of his words. By this he means that he wished to withdraw from the success of his language:

> Il me semblerait bien plutôt que [mon assurance]tient, justement, à la vérité de mes paroles. Ainsi je m'efface volontiers devant le succès de ces paroles, je me retire, je demande presque que l'on m'excuse si je suis à tel point dans le vrai, je laisserais volontiers entendre que ce n'est pas ma faute, que ce sont les choses qui sont comme ça. (pp. 116-117)

Paulhan's testimony shows, as he writes the journal of his progress, that the power of authority in language becomes stronger. We have above the first indication of this in the words "je me retire." While, at the onset, he was concerned about accounting for his self-assurance in using proverbs, the proverbs gained strength, and eventually self-assurance was of little importance. He withdrew before the proverbs. He continues:

> Ainsi pourrait-on dire qu'au lieu de rendre mon opinion par le proverbe, j'ai dû choisir brusquement de rendre le proverbe par mon opinion. (p. 122)

There is an interesting internalization of authority in that it is no longer the proverb which expresses the opinion or the personal thought. It is rather the opinions that are put at the disposition of the proverb. Although it all started from an external sentence, the proverbial authority now demands that it be experience that proves the sentence's truth.

To illustrate this power of authority, the change in position in regards to the saying "Qui bavarde avec les riches, brûle en rentrant la barre de sa porte" (Paulhan, p. 118) will be related. Paulhan had used the saying to scold his friend Rasendra. The latter spent too much time drinking with friends, and Paulhan deemed it to be to the family's detriment, just as the poor who, who spends time in idle talk with the rich one, will not have time to gather wood and, thus, will have to burn the door of the family dwelling in order to light a fire. This saying became authoritative truth to the extent that Paulhan then saw Rasendra as a particular case proving the truth of the proverb. The change of emphasis occurs when, from exhorting an individual,the proverb shows the individual as a particular case of the truth expressed in the

proverb. This is an interesting withdrawal from instrumentality. Initially, the saying was used to reproach a friend. Eventually, it became an occasion for reflection. And thus, in a lived sense, this is the authority of traditional sayings.

Authority, as truth from the past, when internalized, frees from personal concerns. It is an occasion to join in the We of tradition:

> Mais il y a plus: elle semble encore grave, pressante au point que chacun des interlocuteurs, délaissant un instant son opinion propre, s'y trouve intéressé. Tout se passe comme s'il y avait des événements - les proverbes - tels qu'il fût louable, méritoire de parvenir à les exprimer. (Paulhan, 1966, p. 124)

However, as rich as the authority of past may be in sayings with its avantages of We-ness, of truth, of stability, of freedom from personalness, this same authority, when viewed from another perspective, can be seen as the beginning of slavery. The concerns of this study now demand that we turn to the opposite of a positive notion of authority, to what has been seen by Nemerov as ideology. We are capable of effecting a turn to ideology because of an attitudinal, valuative change towards tradition.

Authority as ideology

Nemerov's (1978) view of authority is associated with a ruling class's concern for its legitimation and maintenance of the status quo. The question becomes: are rulers really leaders or do they hold the position because they have convinced the dominated that they are indeed rulers? Where legitimation is at stake, rationalism grounds authority. This is seen as ideology. The association of authority and ideology follows the development of the importance of reason over emotion. Knowing becomes detached from its ethical grounds and forms an abstract system where bits of information are carefully linked to others in order to achieve logical congruity.

Reboul (1980) identifies five characteristics of ideology. It is partisan, collective, dissimulatory, rational, and power serving. Similarly, Griffin (1982) speaks of the way of all ideology as being "mind over body, safety over risk, the predictable over the surprise" (p. 647). The aim of ideology is to produce a comprehensive world view so that nothing in the world

remains unexplained. In the drive for rationality, groups establish a domination with the purpose of controlling surprise. Inherently, this perspective favours the status quo through rational control; explanations will permit action that will ward off uncontrollability before it happens (Griffin, 1982). Ideology is a rational authority, one that establishes a system of control by the mind. It places ideas as an authority above nature or even above our sensual experience of nature, above what we see, what we hear, what we feel, taste, smell. Experience ceases to inform authority. Legitimation, in this scheme, is an interest in rational explanations to others. Legitimation serves to prove that the interests of the ruling groups are true. Through rationalism, these interests can, in appearance, be tested by everyone; they are rationally constructed. Ultimately the view humans have of each other casts them as enemies in a competition for power and for the survival of the status quo. I and They do not become We. They becomes the enemy that must be overpowered.

Traditional sayings respond to which notion of authority? First, as it has been shown, traditional sayings are not a world view because, by themselves, they are not a comprehensive and rational explanation of the world: they are discrete items, appealing to the conscious and to the subconscious mind. They are ethical truths rather than rational explanations. Then, when Reboul's and Griffin's characteristics of ideology as apparently rational explanations are considered, traditional sayings are not ideological. However, in usage they may become part of an ideological system and they may be used to legitimate the status quo for ruling classes. Authority in traditional sayings is founded on the wisdom of knowers, as for the Haya, but its usage is often linked within the mesh of ideology although sayings are not of the same nature as an ideological system. An example of the authority embedded in traditional sayings will now be given from a study of the Afro-American slave proverbs by John Roberts (1978). It will serve to give a situational interpretation of authority and to demonstrate the workings of ideology.

Roberts in studying Afro-American slave proverbs from collections and novels makes the following conclusion:

> The Afro-American slave community seized the proverb and made it an expression of its world view and a reflection of its own unique cultural predicament. In doing so,

> the slaves inadvertently discovered a means of reaffirming their own self-worth within the universal order. In nature the slaves sought and found solutions that were applicable in a world absorbed in social, economic and political concerns, a world of which they formed an amorphous center. (p. 158)

The slave's perception of the world is reflected in their proverb. Proverbs express experiential information about the nature of being a slave, but often, since the proverbs were the words of authority, they could be used under the watchful eye of the overseer without fear of sanctions. Where "Death don't see no difference 'tween the big house and the cabin" expressed relativity before death, the individual could be freed of personal responsibility for the content of the saying. Authority was one means, for the slaves, to protect themselves. They could hide behind tradition.

A second point to make with regards to the Afro-American slave proverbs is their interpretation within an ideological system. When Millie Evans Master used the saying "You will reap what you sow, that you sow it singly and reap it doubly" (Roberts, 1978, p. 130), although the master used the saying to protect his own interests and was refering to the punishment that disobedience would incur, the slave interpreted it in the context of the eventual fate of slavery: that is, reaping doubly for having lived the injustices of the system. Inherent in ideological usage of sayings is a possibility of freedom. Traditional sayings are not ideological in the sense of forcing. On the contrary, they carry in themselves the very condition for liberation.

Authority must then be balanced by its counterparts: consent and critique. While on the one hand stands authority emanating from the wisdom of knowers or their rational legitimation, on the other hand stands the attitude of the receiver. Authority proposes stability; that it be legitimate or not is another of its dimension. However, authority is always received by someone and the nature of authority will largely depend on its reception.

Legitimation attempts to fosters consent. When the dominated are in agreement with a position, one cannot speak of violence. The example of the Baruya of New Guinea can be cited. It is a tribe with no social class nor chief. However, although power structures are not evident, domination occurs. Through rituals, patterns of domination are legitimated:

> Il fait apparaître que la force la plus forte du pouvoir, ce n'est pas la violence, c'est le consentement, le consentement des dominés à leur domination, la domination masculine étant ordinairement reconnue et vécue par les femmes comme légitime [...] Ce consentement, ils l'apportent parce que l'état des choses leur apparaît comme légitime. (Godelier, 1978, p. 23)

Another example, taken from the diary of Frances Anne Kemble (Moffat & Painter, 1979), expresses the power of consent in the nineteenth century Southern United States plantation farms. Even though she explained to the slaves of her household, that they were not slaves, that she would not accept their being slaves, that their's was a friendship relationship, they did not understand. Even though Kemble did not see herself as a mistress, nor did she act like one, the "helpers" treated her to her despair like their owner. The slaves had so completely consented to being her slaves that they did not understand that she could not be their mistress. Consent is an integral part of legitimation and authority.

To the position of consent must be added its dialectical opposite: critique. Critique is, first, an unmasking of hidden interests behind every pretense to pure knowledge and rationality (Ricoeur, 1973, p. 158) in the tradition of Habermas. But secondly, as Griffin (1982) advocates, critique must return to the experience of the subject who seeks meaning and purpose. Critique must not remain abstract and rational. It has to return to the life of the people, the subjects and their experiences.

Critique in its sense of unmasking interests and in its return to subjective experience is the necessary counterpart to consent. Both critique and consent are necessary each in turn. They embody the dialectic change-stability, rational-holistic. Ricoeur proposes that the stability of tradition allows us to evolve without questioning all of our knowledge base:

> Rien de plus propre à dogmatiser que la conscience éthique; rien de plus vulnérable aussi à la problématisation. D'un côté, ce qui fait la cohérence d'une conduite éthique personnelle, comme la stabilité d'une tradition commune c'est de *ne pas recommencer* sans cesse à évaluer ses options principales, mais de les conserver comme des convictions acquises et de s'appuyer sur elles, afin de s'élancer légèrement et sans scrupules dans les situations nouvelles. Ainsi se *consolide* un ordre de valeurs qui permet de trancher vite et de désencombrer des hésitations dernières les décisions quotidiennes. (1951, p. 760, emphasis added)

The role of stability (and consent) is complemented by the role of critique (nonconsent) and

learning lies in the tension between the two. Thus, Loukey Bersianik cries out:

> Il serait intéressant de voir un tableau comparatif de la misogynie, entre les langues...C'est sans contredit dans les dictionnaires des proverbes de tous les pays, des sentences et des maximes de tous les peuples, c'est aussi dans les dictionnaires des citations, qu'elle a trouvé les plus beau spécimens de ce phénomène universel. (1976, p. 249)

She is withdrawing the consent to the authority expressed in traditional sayings. From this first step a critique of interests is needed, but most importantly, as in this case, it must be a return to experience in order to question the saying and create new alternatives. When "Man proposes, God disposes" indicates that the patriarchal system is dominant, we have to ask whose interests are being served. We also have to question our experience of proposing. Do I, as a woman, plan or propose? Is it to be the man's task to propose, as in marriage for example. What is the sense that I have of proposing? I could change the saying to "Humans propose, God disposes," but then I have to see God as a neutral entity as well. "Humans propose, Deities dispose," but that is not quite right yet! And so the process must go on from stability (objectification) to change. Constantly, I shift from consent to rejection and that is the role of the saying of tradition.

Another example can be found in the poetry and letters of Emily Dickinson who constantly lived this process of consent and critique:

> The evidence of her surviving letters and poems is sufficient to establish that for Dickinson the traditional proverb—whose authority she found by turns burdensome and contrary to her own experience, and compelling and apt as an expression of her own vision—played a continuing role in the development of her personality over the course of her entire lifetime. (Barnes, 1979, p. 238)

At times, Dickinson used some sayings without modifying them. Her various uses of the proverb "No rose without a thorn" shows that she accepted, unquestioning, its meaning. When it was modified, it was the immediate context that demanded adaptation:

> To Austin Dickinson, 6 July, 1851, responding to his humorous account of attendance at a recital by Jerry Lind:
> I'm glad you took a seat opposite the Lord Mayor if he had sat in your lap it had pleased me even better—it must seem pretty grand to be a city officer and pat the Sheriff's back and wink to the Policeman! I'm sorry you got so tired and would suggest respectfully a Rose in every thorn! (1958, p. 46)

In this letter, Emily Dickinson does not change the meaning of the saying "No rose without a

thorn." However, at other moments, she completely rejects traditional sayings. She withdraws her confidence in tradition and refuses its wisdom:

> They say that "Time assuages"
> Time never did assuage
> An actual suffering strengthens
> As Sinews do, with age
>
> Time is a Test of Trouble -
> But not a Remedy
> If such it prove, it prove too
> There was no Malady (1955, p. 686)

Rather than agreeing with the saying, Emily Dickinson squarely disagrees: time does not heal. On the contrary, she says that time intensifies suffering. The saying did not answer to her own experience of time, and so the previously accepted proverb was rejected and even negated.

Consequently, from the above presentation of tradition as an authority of wisdom or as the power of ideology, we must conclude that a second level of considerations has to be added: consent and critique. In this context, the initial discussion of problem areas in traditional sayings has gone a full circle. The debates between the learned and the popular and between state and family education rejoin authority and ideology. There is no question that currently rational explanations are valued above holistic (popular) approaches. Hence, the holders of rational knowledge become groups of authority who, because rationalism is the very fabric of ideology, legitimize their authority rationally. Learned taste becomes highly valued and attempts are made to exorcise the beast of a-rationality (Harth, 1975; Cottom, 1980). Traditional sayings, with their ethical world, do not fit within the dominant mode of "viewing the world" rationally. Parallel to this, the ascension of rational knowledge into social structures has created the need for state education where the sophistication of rational knowledge is taught without the disturbance of an ethical world: the popular, family, rural world of traditional sayings. However, while they are being changed to fit new contexts in advertising, traditional sayings are subjugated to ideology. They become legitimators of the status quo rather than a base for consent and critique. Only consent is allowed. Tradition and authority then become part of an ideological system because they are not allowed to unfold

dialectically with critique.

E. CONCLUSION

Tradition in traditional sayings presents itself in the form of an intersubjective world, a stock of previous experiences handed down as a scheme of easy, ready references. It is common to a cultural group and expresses an ethical world, a world of enmeshed practice and interests. It is a world that modifies action but a world which is also, in turn, modified by action. Although the sayings of tradition have served ideological purposes of legitimation and rationalization, they are not in themselves ideological because they are discrete items that form a base for stability and critique.

1. The pedagogical significance of tradition in sayings

The word pedagogy was seldom mentioned in this chapter on tradition. Yet, it was present in the dialectic between I-They, I-We, consent-critique, stability-change, world view-ethical world. Pedagogy is the voice that speaks to the necessity of each moment in the constant shift from one to the other.

Tradition in traditional sayings is not inert. It is the lived experiences of many I's, of many people who have formed a common and yet nonpersonal ground. While sayings express the knowledge gained by each individual, this knowledge is based on previously acquired knowledge transmitted in the form of objectifications. The general, nonpersonal nature of objectifications is relative. It is nonpersonal (They) in the sense that it does not emanate from the personal situation in space, time, and social life. Yet, it is personal even though it is not my very own. It is personal since the conscious life we lead is a continuation of, and is grounded in, past consciousnesses that have become to us a stepping ground: this tradition is Us, shapes us, and thus is personal. At the same time, the tradition is modified, reinterpreted anew by each personal use.

Pedagogy stands in the recognition of the I-They, I-We dialectic. Learning, as the goal of pedagogy (guiding to learning), is fostered by bringing nonpersonal experiences to the learner. It is in the appropriation of what I do not possess that learning occurs. It is I going to They and making They part of I. Metaphorically, learning is like eating an apple. The apple being exterior (nonpersonal) becomes part of a person through digestion. In the process, personal and nonpersonal are necessary moments in the continuous circle where They becomes I in order to be objectified again as They. Pedagogy is the constant holding of They before the I so that the person may appropriate the They.

Yet, pedagogy also lies in fostering the recognition that They becomes We. Pedagogy is in the constant pointing out of the nonforeign nature of the tradition displayed in curricula, textbooks, classroom posters, songs, and all the objectifications inhabiting school life. In an era of competition, survival, and separation between I and They, pedagogy is the mode of restoring the common at the heart of the foreign, of unifying where separation has occured.

Pedagogy, when resituating We to its central place in tradition, must also be aware that the ideological mode of authority is constantly available to engulf the dialectic I-They, I-We by eradicating the I pole and leaving the They in the guise of a We. Ideology, through rationality, upsets the equilibrium between the personal and the nonpersonal by placing all efforts in convincing an I that They is right, speaks truly, or has gained legitimate authority. In education, ideology is the legitimating of the status quo, the giving of curricula in such a way that students are not allowed to question for themselves. Appropriation, which is an individual act stemming from the individual as source of action, becomes an acceptance of the given. In this sense, giving leads to treason and tradition begets a negative value.

Since a restoration of the We as central gives a naive, trusting attitude, pedagogy then allows for the danger of ideology. Yet, this danger, identified as violence by Paul Ricoeur in the introduction, is necessary because it keeps the tension drawn between consent and critique. The danger of ideology is a constant reminder that learning is not a direct appropriation but must be a critical as well as a receptive act. Pedagogy solicits a constant reversal from consent

to critique and from critique to consent.

Tradition in traditional sayings also recognized the significance of stability for change and the misconception that progress is constant change was questioned. Traditional sayings, through the debate on their disappearance, have shown that stability always precedes change. Similarly in pedagogy, curriculum must be considered as a stepping stone, never an end in itself because change is lurking. Stability and change are both needed, and again each is the condition for the other. Learning to print in grade one is a step establishing a firm ground of knowledge before cursive writing can be mastered, which in turn leads to elaborate calligraphy. Each step is a mastery of the hand and leads to the other.

Finally, traditional sayings have introduced the ethical world of knowledge. To dispell knowledge as world view only is important. While contemplative, explanatory knowledge has its role to play in education, pedagogy as expressed by traditional sayings is an example of warding off the exclusive reign the world view perspective has been gaining. It restores ethics within knowledge and, at the same time, reshapes action within consent and critique. It is impossible to introduce the dialectic consent-critique in a world where knowledge is viewed as neutral. Only consent can be given since there is nothing to critique. Pedagogy pledges the need for searching the ethics within knowledge. In conclusion, Percy Bysshe Shelly once poetized:

> I know
> The past, and thence I will essay to glean
> A warning for the future, so that man
> May profit from his errors and derive
> Experience from his folly. (In Foreman, 1961, p. 386)

Mikel Dufrenne adds: "Une tradition qui ne serait pas asservissante n'a pas à être renié" (1980, p. 9). Weaving a path between the above two sayings, the recovery and understanding of traditional sayings can be important to education. Tradition, as expressed in traditional sayings, teaches that positive and negative values, personal and nonpersonal, stability and change, are not an "either" "or" possibility. Both are necessary, and if tradition can lead us to serfdom, it can also liberate us, but liberation has no meaning unless we have been slaves.

V. Traditional sayings as formalized language

A. Introduction

The second part of the phrase "traditional sayings" is the word "saying." The hermeneutic method now requires that this word be probed in order to gain a further understanding of how it can be said that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice. This chapter deals with language. It explores in what way it can be said that language speaks and how it is that language can speak pedagogically.

In *Fragments d'un discours amoureux*, Roland Barthes declares, "Comprendre, n'est-ce pas scinder l'image, défaire le *je*, organe superbe de la méconnaissance" (1980, p. 72). The interpretations proposed in the previous chapter on tradition aimed at bringing to language the importance played by the We in its central position between the I and the They. In an era when individualism is a predominant value and tradition is denigrated, it is important to be reminded that understanding, in its usual as well as in its hermeneutic sense, is the result of a dialectic between the I, the We, and the They: between participation and distanciation. This chapter on the language, the voice, of traditional sayings will examine the form of traditional sayings and attempt to divulge its pedagogic nature. Themes inherent to the tradition of traditional sayings will recur in this chapter. The dialectic between objectification and experience, stability and change, We and I and They underlies the presentation. It is through the formalization of language that the above themes will be recast into particular and general, familiar and new, common and individual perspectives.

Language is the *causa formalis*, the form that traditional sayings have taken. It is through a system of words, syntax, morphology, and phonology that tradition expresses itself. Yet this *causa formalis* takes a more precise form: that of formalized language. It is a language that has been fixed by usage. Expression follows the road already beaten; it is like repeating a choreography where one had no input into formulation. In general, formalization of language could be viewed as an ideal language. For example:

> It is argued that formalization of discourse provides a pre-condition for consensus and progress in development of knowledge, for the consequence of formalization according to Wartofsky would be an ideal and universal language in which all rational beings or members of the community of discourse would share common rules and common commitments to the validity of inferences made in accordance with these rules. (Stehr, 1981, p. 21)

Stehr, along with Wartofsky, believes that a completely formalized language would eradicate incomprehension because everyone would have the same connotations and denotations of language. This view leads ultimately to the insertion of control within speech. Blosch states:

> It is because the formalisation of language is a way whereby one speaker can coerce the response of another that it can be seen as a form of social control. It is really a type of communication where rebellion is impossible and only revolution could be feasible. It is a situation where power is all or nothing and of course in society total refusal is normally out of the question. (1974, p. 64)

Then, according to this view, formalization of speech is a method of control.

Formalization, from the above testimonies, becomes a concept that may seem to be, at first, in opposition to pedagogy. It is close to indoctrination. Thus, the basic reaction to formalization is that it is restrictive and manipulative. Blosch, through his introduction of control into formalized speech, indicates that formal language, be it in rituals, incantations, proverbs or songs, has acquired an "arthritic state" (p. 65). The language has played an inclusion-exclusion game that results in the selection of certain choices to the complete exclusion of others. Formal language presents a very specific view of the world. This world view, or ethical world, according to Blosh, dominates and presses into indoctrination. It must be noticed here that the very word "indoctrination" is indicative of an orientation which prizes the I above the We or the They when the We or They is pressed upon I. It also denounces the moulding effected by society upon the individual and that is deemed *not* to be pedagogic. However, if formalization of language is seen as stability, a different approach can be fostered. Traditional sayings are a formalized language, their form is fixed, and their fixity holds the old just as it can hold the new: "Cette fixité qui tient l'ancien comme elle peut tenir le nouveau" (Meschonnic, 1976, p. 421). But, does it mean that traditional formalized language per se indoctrinates and controls?

This chapter on the form of traditional sayings, the formalized nature of traditional speaking, will present an argument against the view of language as indoctrination and control. While it is agreed that formalized language rests on commonness and communication, it is believed that Blosch, by not making a distinction between the form and the usage context of the saying and by grounding his study in the paramount value of individualism, is interpreting the phenomenon at the level of explanation only. It will be argued that the form of traditional sayings is intimately related to pedagogy; the form of traditional sayings is a pedagogical voice through familiarity and polysemy. In order to allow the voice of language to speak, a distinction between form and usage has to be made. Usage cannot be forgotten entirely; it still hovers in the background, very much present. But, while form is emphasized, usage cannot be excluded. However, as the next chapter will make explicit, instrumental usage restricts the pedagogical voice into a tool for domination.

In order to define the application of the word "form" in the present context, it must be pointed out that it is customary in paroemiology to distinguish between the form and the meaning of traditional sayings (Priebe, 1971, p. 26). On the one hand, the form or the structure of a saying is dismembered without taking the meaning value of words into consideration. On the other hand, sayings are studied as items collected or analyzed because they are meaningful utterances. In the context of this chapter, "form" will be taken in the extended sense of *the form* of *saying*: structure and meaning. This chapter will deal with the form of language, as opposed to the content of tradition, and to the function defined by a goal and an agent. Following Loux and Richard, the "form" of formalized language will include structure and meaning but will not primarily emphasize tradition nor function.

> A partir de sa définition du proverbe et des constatations que nous avions pu faire sur nos propres matériaux, nous avons donc été conduits à une réflexion sur ces problèmes de relation entre *fond* et *forme* à l'intérieur même du discours proverbial qui nous amènera, en conclusion de cette analyse, à esquisser une typologie de ses formes. (1978, p. 243, emphasis added)

Structure and meaning ("forme et fond") will then be seen as indissoluble elements of the form of sayings because the structure has a meaning which speaks as loudly as the message itself:

"La forme est tout aussi signifiante que la substance" (Loux & Richard, 1978, p. 243). Hence the meaning of a saying constantly flows into its structure and vice versa. Through its fixed form, it is as if the sentence of the saying becomes a single word (Paulhan, 1966, p. 111).

However, the distinction between form and function will be emphasized under the assumption that a saying can be different from the usage it is put to. Like a vase which has been moulded in clay, fired, and glazed and that has taken the existence of objectifications, a saying is moulded into language by tradition. The usage to which the vase and the saying are put is dependent on the user's intentions. Since the aim here is to establish the pedagogic voice of language, not that of the user, the lived sense of the language will take precedence. Throughout history, traditional sayings, as a voice, have been placed into innumerable uses. In this chapter, let formalized language speak as Heidegger would have it:

> To reflect on language thus demands that we enter into the speaking of language in order to take up our stay with language, i.e., within *its* speaking, not within our own. (1971, p. 190)

The guiding question to be presently attended to is: If traditional sayings have been thought to have a didactic power, what elements of their form (as structure and meaning) can be viewed as pedagogic? In order to come closer to interpretive answers to the above question, three parts will be presented. First, the elements of form, as seen by paroemiologists, will be reviewed. Secondly, examples of differently classified sayings, namely maxims and proverbs, will be reviewed. Thirdly, the knowledge acquired in the first two sections will be interpreted hermeneutically through the notions of familiarity, metaphor, polysemy, and communication in order to identify the pedagogic voice.

B. Elements of form

Paroemiologists detail five general elements that are common to all traditional sayings: ordinary language, relatedness to oral language, brevity of style, clear and simple syntax, and polysemy. Although paroemiologists (Taylor, 1962; Maloux, 1966; Mieder, 1973) are in agreement about the centrality and commonality of the above elements, they, with the notable

exception of Loux and Richard, do not question how simple syntax, for example, can be interpreted in the context of speaking with the words of tradition. This section will present evidence to support the elements identified, but it will also seek to establish the significance the elements play. Commonness of world is central to the form and meaning of traditional sayings. Examples given in this section were gathered from daily life or from collections or articles on paroemiology.

1. Ordinary language

The vocabulary used in traditional sayings is usually very simple. It reflects everyday speech (Holbeck, 1970, p. 470; Rogedem, 1972, p. 680). Technical terms are avoided; sayings are restricted to words that everyone knows.

> Practice what you preach.
> You can't draw blood from a stone.
> Ça va comme sur des roulettes.

The objects or concepts referred to are familiar. Gaden (1931) makes the same remark as most paroemiologists. He speaks about the Senegalese sayings:

> Au point de vue de la langue, nous n'avons pas rencontré dans les proverbes de formes ni de tournures qui ne fussent d'usage courant dans le langage actuel. (p. vii)

Rooth (1976, p. 286) remarks that sayings using unfamiliar words soon pass out of usage and Gaden adds to the above:

> C'est dans les incantations que des formes archaîques ont le plus de chances d'avoir été conservées. (p. vii)

Similarly in other languages, some sayings have retained words which are not unfamiliar but archaic. The word "Thyself" in "Know Thyself" is an example of this. Although the word is familiar, it is not commonly used in daily life. Archaism points to the "already-fixed" (le déjà figé) of sayings (Cerquiglini & Cerquiglini, 1976, p. 361).

On the other hand, sayings are grounded in socio-economic conditions. Rogedem states that: "Le choix des images est conditionné par le substrat culturel ou les jeux de mots évocateurs" (1972, p. 681). Thus, it is appropriate that the coal-mining town of New

Waterford in Nova Scotia should have as a popular saying: "He's as loose as a pan of soot in a windstorm" (Personal communication, July 1983). The soot is familiar to coal towns and miners. Windstorms are an important part of life when one lives by the ocean. The occurrence of animals in traditional sayings are also taken from familiar settings (Loux & Richard, 1978, p. 247), and as an example, the film *Distortions*, produced by Godbout and Sauvageau (1981), brings from the African perspective the saying: "Ce n'est pas parce que la bille reste un siècle dans le fleuve qu'elle deviendra un crocodile." Crocodiles are metaphorical figures used in sayings quite customarily in a country where crocodiles are familiar animals. Traditional sayings then are formed from ordinary, everyday language, and although some elements are archaic, all are or were familiar to the society using them.

The ordinary language of sayings establishes a world of commonness. Between the saying and the speaker or hearer, there is a bond based on the commonality of world and word. Be it archaic or socio-economically bound, the vocabulary reveals a world that is familiar and common. The fixity of the saying leads, through exclusions and inclusions, into a perspective which is shared or common to those who live in a particular context. The ordinariness of language is a stepping stone to commonality.

2. Relatedness to oral language

Traditional sayings are mysteriously associated by paroemiologists (Milner, 1969b, p. 380) to the realm of dreams and jokes. Even Freud has recognized this:

> On retrouve la symbolique du rêve dans toute l'imagerie inconsciente, dans toutes les représentations collectives populaires, notamment dans le folklore, le mythe, les légendes, les dictons, les proverbes, les jeux de mots courants: elle y est même plus complète que dans le rêve. (In Loux & Richard, 1978, p. 249)

Traditional sayings have a vague quality that researchers cannot pinpoint although they indicate that sayings are part of oral cultures. Orality still plays an important part in our experience even though the language of the Western World has been alphabetized for approximately three thousand years:

From the stand point of human evolution a perspective on the "orality," if I may use

> that term, of the human animal requires us to recognize that oral language is fundamental to our species, whereas reading and writing wear the appearance of a recent accident. It is a curious kind of arrogance which presumes to identify human intelligence with literacy. (Havelock, 1976, p. 6)

The Greek alphabet was at first used to sustain the identity of the precious oral culture of Greece. Similarly, the inscription of traditional sayings into writing in many cultures has allowed the survival of part of the oral way of life. But as objectified writing, traditional sayings, even written, still display qualities inherent in orality. That is an element of the partnership between the past and the present. We will now examine the characteristics of orality as they are found in traditional sayings. These are diction, rhythm, acoustic memory, reference to completeness of experience, and participation in an itinerary rather than hindsight.

Rhythm and diction

First, traditional sayings are akin to oral language through their diction and rhythm. No special diction is required when speaking through traditional language. The diction flows continuously. It is not broken as it would be in reading a poem for example. Rhythm is in perfect agreement with everyday speech, and the iambic or dactyllic patterns in English, for example, are preferred as they are also in oral speech:

> The fog's so thick, by, you can drive in a nail and hang your mitts on it. (Personal communication, July 1983)

This Main à Dieu (Nova Scotian fishing village) saying is said as if one were speaking in everyday conversation. It is an example of rhythm and diction that are the same in traditional sayings as in oral language.

Acoustic memory

Secondly, an acoustic memory (Havelock, 1978) is often built into sayings. This memory is usually described as a mnemonic device. It is called "the development of audio-verbal automation" by Claude Buridant (1976, p. 416). The automation leads memory into recall. The similarity between traditional sayings, medieval ballads, and nursery rhymes is noticed by Taylor (1962) and Barrick (1970, p. 34). End rhyme is very popular and is a first

example of automatic or mnemonic devices. Barrick points out that in English less than ten percent of proverbs rhyme while more than half of Spanish and Portuguese proverbs do (1970, p. 43). The development of rhyme as a device is interesting and furthers the point that rhyme fosters remembering. For example, the saying "Red sky at night is a sailor's delight; red sky at morning is a sailor's warning" is found in Matthew XVI, 2-3 in the King James version of the *Bible*:

> He answered and said onto them
> When it is evening, you say it will be fair weather for the sky is red.
> And in the morning it will be foul weather today for the sky is red and lowring. O you hypocrites, you can discern the face of the sky but can you not discern the signs of the times?

But the rhymed form, not the biblical form, is remembered. Hence, rhyme produces an acoustic repetition that favours remembering.

If rhyme is absent, however, a catch or a jingle in the wording attracts attention (Taylor, 1962, p. 143). The following sayings are examples:

> Like father, like son.
> Veni, vidi, vince.
> The law of love is better than the love of law.

Alliterations serve a similar purpose and "La chance sourit aux audacieux" through the repetition of the sounds (z) and (s) builds a memory that expects the repetition and guides recall. The use of parallallism and contrast in sentence construction also serves memory:

> Grand parleur, petit faiseur.
> L'argent ne rentre pas par la porte mais sort par les fenêtres. (Des Ruisseaux, 1978)

Through parallelism, contrast, catch, jingle, alliterations and rhyme, traditional sayings partake in orality by creating an acoustic memory which aids memorization. Sayings, in a strictly oral culture, cannot be deposited in books or some other form of documentation in order to be revived when the need arises. They have to be memorized and remembered. Hence, the African proverb (quoted again in the film *Distorsions*) "Un vieillard qui meurt est une bibliothèque qui brûle" expresses a very real concern for the remembrance of sayings in oral cultures. They are not inscribed anywhere else than in memory, and devices to foster remembering are built into the sayings. This is an important part of orality (Havelock, 1978).

Reference to oral experience

Thirdly, sayings are akin to oral speech in their ability to bring back reference to the completeness of oral experience. The embodiment of the world of the We has already been mentioned. This world of We means here a participative and contemplative dialectic between the I and the They. Human experience is not exclusively individual when the We is restored at the heart of the I. Hence, in the completeness of human experience, I and We and They together are hinted at in sayings. The I speaks or hears in a concrete situation, the They is the objectification and the experience of others moulded in it, and the We is the common bond that tradition and formalized language bring. Furthermore, it was argued that sayings express an ethical world, not an exclusively contemplative view of the world. Again, the completeness of experience is restored through the integration of knowledge and ethics. Havelock states that sayings are "like encyclopedias of conduct for oral cultures" (1978, p. 4). However, and more crucially in this context, sayings partake of the total experience of *saying* as compared to writing. Gobard emphatically says: "L'écrit sépare" (1976, p. 17). Writing separates the author and the situation from the script while speaking includes them, ostensively. The basic complexity of human experience present in the participation of oral language is lost in the contemplation of writing where the They or It predominates. Abrahams and Babcock (1977) view proverbs in this way:

> While written texts break most ties of discourse to ostensive reference (that is, reference to the situation common to those engaged in an interaction), proverbs carry a typical, if not specific, ostensive reference onto the page. And because a proverb is strongly identified with the type of face-to-face scene in which it is commonly found, a carry over of normative meaning occurs despite the dissociation of the verbal meaning of the text and the rhetorical intention. (p. 415)

Abrahams and Babcock are pointing out the reference to oral language and to the situation that sayings carry even into a written text. For example, "The master's eye makes the horse fat," (Hazlitt, 1907/1969, p. x) although it is now a written saying, brings to attention the felt experience of seeing with our own eyes and of the value judgment in it. The saying brings us into the world of participation although contemplation is not excluded. Had the sentence (not a saying) been "The master's eye makes the fat horse" or "The master's eye fattens the horse"

the effect would have been completely different although the meaning would have been the same. The latter sentences do not offer a sense of participation, and it is as if the form that custom has sanctioned makes us enter into a world that we already know. Any variations do not provide a sense of We-ness, commonality, that face-to-face situations or written proverbs offer. The proverb brings back the We inherent in the saying.

Itinerary or *hodos*

Finally, traditional sayings partake of orality through what Havelock, after Plato and Parmenides, calls the *hodos*: a dream, a journeying down, an itinerary;

> The word symbolizes both the route and the taking of the route. The philosopher Parmenides resorts to this metaphor and Plato revives it [...] It catches the sense of the oral connective process and it is significant that both thinkers suggest that this route within the mind can be circular. It catches the sense of the oral reciter's commitment to a track of sound and speech which he follows rather than one which he himself directs. He is still the traveler with his feet moving along the road absorbed in marking the direction set for him, watching the signs set by the roadside; not the intellectual who calculates the steps that he is to take successively one by one in full consciousness. (1978, pp. 15-16)

It has been noted that paroemiologists associate traditional sayings with dreams and jokes (Barrick, 1970). This association brings up the topic of the unconscious. However, the problem lies in that paroemiologists do not probe the comparison conscious-unconscious. When such an approach is taken, sayings are restored to the flow of events that carry the conversation and the oral speech. If consciousness is associated with rationality and contemplation, it can be noted that in all three notions there is a desire to explain with the powers of the mind. The antinomy to these, non-consciousness, a-rationality, and participation, are vague notions that are defined by the absence of consciousness and rationality. What non-consciousness, a-rationality, and participation indicate is a lived sense of letting the unfolding of events carry the *total* being in the situation. This total carrying explains why participation, a-rationality, and non-consciousness are vague and nebulous notions: wholeness is baffling, yet, they are lived as totalities.

Traditional sayings *carry* the hearer and speaker into this realm of experience. When the flow of events is uncontrolled, unplanned, and unmanipulated, it is seen as dream-like,

unconscious. Those are epithets that mask the lived sense of the total experience that the mind has not completely explained. Yet, the flow of events in oral situations is more associative, less planned, than in written language. Orality has the quality of a journey-like, dream-like experience (Havelock, 1978). Written language allows more time for contemplation, consciousness, and rationality. This is one part of experience leading to planning. Orality brings consciousness in touch with the unfolding of events in such a way that consciousness is complemented by its negative or its absence. In a similar vein, rationality is complemented by emotions that flare up or flow and so speech can be stopped or questioned. Furthermore, contemplation is lost into participation.

In conclusion, traditional sayings are akin to oral language in four ways: they follow oral diction and rhythm, they exhibit a built-in acoustical memory that is inherent in orality, they refer to the completeness of oral situations, and they restore participation (and the unfolding of the world) at the heart of speech. This is in contrast to the more contemplative planning of writing. These characteristics of orality continue to affirm the importance of commonness and to reunite I and They into We.

3. Brevity of style

Traditional sayings are "short and pithy" (Wilson, 1970, p. vii). Their brevity and conciseness has been the most noted element of their form (Hulme, 1932; Milner, 1969a; Holbek, 1970; Abrahams, 1970; Loux & Richard, 1978). This leads paroemiologists to explore the consequence and impact of brevity. Traditional sayings are didactic techniques that attempt to have the impact of a bomb: expecting no retort, they are short and to the point (Ollier, 1976, p. 34). Brevity gives the speaker the advantage of saying little in words but much in effect. Because the utterances are straight forward and explanations are avoided, sayings are said to present "one-sided teachings" (Hulme, 1932, p. 9). Brevity is then seen, in paroemiology, as a method of indoctrination.

Although brevity can lead to interpretations of one-sidedness, they can also be seen as pointers, much like weather-vanes. Being short, they do not stand over decision-making. Instead, it can be argued that they direct, much like catalysts do. Their purpose can be seen as one of introducing to the common world of experiences. They stand pointing to the direction that the We has taken in the past. Hence, this element again restores the commonness of the world of traditional sayings.

4. Syntax

The syntax of traditional sayings reaffirms the theme already mentioned: familiarity. However, it divulges a new element: a time withdrawal. The syntax of sayings is simple and clear. As separate utterances, sayings do not derogate to the rules of syntax. However, Seitel (1969) and Ben-Amos (1976) have noted that in the total context a saying stands out "from the normal conversational flow because of its unusual syntax" (Seitel, 1969). The saying "Seeing is believing" is syntactically correct. Its style does not violate any rule. But, its compactness of style creates a sense of difference: it does not flow unnoticed. This is what Paul Zumthor has called the proverbial epiphenomenon: "l'épiphénomème proverbial" (1976, p. 322). As a quotation, a saying brings the words of the past to bear on the present situation. This is done through a simple and clear syntax that also shares stylistic elements already shown, namely brevity and mnemonic devices such as alliteration, rhyme, repetition, and parallelism. Hence compactness is a key element of syntax. This compactness leads to a style which excludes articles, antecedents, and chooses a word order different from normal speech. For example, "Chien qui aboie ne mord pas" (Quittard, 1842/1968, p. 224) excludes the article, which would normally be used in speech: "Le chien qui aboie ne mord pas." Similarly, "Long absent, soon forgotten" (Kelly, 1879/1977, p. 37) excludes the subject, the verb, and reverses word order. Daily speech would require the following: "Whoever is absent for a longtime will soon be forgotten." The above examples serve to illustrate that although the syntax of proverbs is clear, simple, and correct, it does make the sayings stand out from the rest of the

context through compactness.

When the verb is probed more deeply, it presents interesting insights. Loux and Richard (1978, p. 244), after Buridant (1976, p. 394) and Greimas (1966, p. 59), have pointed to the verb tenses commonly used: the present and the imperative. Note the following sayings taken at random:

> Who dares to play when the lion roars? (Scheven, 1981, p. 225)
> Honore ton père et ta mère. (Maloux, 1960, p. 156)
> The crow thinks her own bird the fairest. (Kelly, 1879/1977, p. 25)

The present and the imperative tenses are most generally used. They are also of the broadest applicability. The imperative can be used in almost any situation to present an action "sous la forme d'un ordre, d'une exhortation, d'une prière" (Grévisse, 1965, p. 611). No restriction of time is given, and the significance of the imperative is the mode of authority that it establishes. The present of the sayings is also of broad applicability. First, it is the most used tense to express action on the level of reality in daily life. Secondly, it is also a tense that, beyond its first meaning of immediate and momentary action, expresses the past *and* the future. Grévisse (1975) states that:

> 715. Dans un sens large ou figuré, le présent sert à marquer:
> 1) Un fait d'habitude...
> 2) Un fait qui se trouve être vrai à quelque moment que ce soit dans la durée....
> 3) Un fait se rapportant à un passé récent ou à un futur proche...
> 4) Un fait futur présenté comme conséquence directe et infaillible d'un autre....
> 5) Un fait qui a lieu dans un passé plus ou moins éloigné....(p. 720).

The above quotation from Grévisse serves to indicate how the present does not only mean the here and now. It is a characteristic of its broad applicability that it also includes the past and the future. In conclusion, Valérie stated in "Idée fixe":

> L'opinion publique discerne trois états du temps: *Passé*, *Présent*, *Futur*. [...] Vous pouvez piquer ce [...] trident n'importe où dans la chronologie. Le point choisi pour le *présent* possède toujours un *passé* et un *futur* relatif. (1972, p. 235)

Traditional sayings, by using the present tense, are in effect referring to the past and to the future.

The significance of the verb tenses, the imperative and the present, is that they effect a time withdrawal: "une mise hors du temps" (Loux & Richard, 1978, p. 243). The verb tenses

join the effect of the syntax of sayings by drawing them out of the speech context. It is remarkable that, through simple, ordinary tense usage and syntax in general, sayings stand out. They effect an a-historical position in an historical situation. The present mode of "Seeing is believing" represents a past, a present, and a future. It tells of an ethical state of affairs that endures beyond time and place. This syntactical characteristic affirms the autonomy of the saying in relation to its context (Ollier, 1976, p. 336). This autonomy brings the past, tradition, to bear on the present situation or context. It brings a larger context to the situation: a universal context. The tense of the verb and the fact that sayings stand out pull the present situation and situate it within a world of common tradition. Although they are akin to oral and ordinary language, sayings have the ability to break the rules of face-to-face interaction through the intervention of an a-historical element. They bring the nonpresent to bear on the situation. This nonpresent is, however, moulded by the past.

5. Polysemy

Beyond ordinary and oral language, brevity and syntax, traditional sayings are semantically loose. This is called polysemy: "By polysemy I shall mean that remarkable feature of words in natural languages which is their ability to mean more than one thing" (Ricoeur, 1973, p. 95). Nemerov, for example, indicates three different interpretations of the simple minded proverb much heard in his youth: "The exception proves the rule" (1978, pp. 42-48). In a scientific interpretation, "proves" would be read as "tests," "tries out." The exception in this case shows the rule to be not inclusive enough or wrong. In daily use, "proves" would indicate that the exception shows the rule to be right. In a poetic vein, the exception could be viewed as the rule, leading to questions of relations between particular and general. To sum up:

> Common sense tells you to neglect the exceptional and live within the known world. But art and sciences are for a moment one in the injunction, even the commandment, to look first, only, always, at the exception, and what doesn't fit: because, one says, it will turn into the universal while you look; because says the other, it will show you the way to a universal not yet known. (p. 48)

Similarly, the proverb: "Stuff a cold and starve a fever" has been the object of much discussion. Polysemy emerges from three aspects of the saying. Syntactically, two different meanings are given. One is literal: if you have a cold, you must eat, and if you have a fever, you must fast. The immediate question becomes: What if you have a cold and a fever? Do you eat or do you fast? These questions lead to a second and elliptical interpretation of the proverb's meaning restoring words that could have been removed: If you stuff a cold, you will have a fever to starve. However, as Gallacher (1942, pp. 576-581) points out, polysemy is also present in the lexical items themselves. What is a cold? Can cold and cough be equated since they often occur together? A cold is also accompanied by a fever, or can "cold" be interpreted as a chill, and thus the proverb may indicate a preventive measure. Further to the many meanings of cold, we must wonder on the meaning of "stuff." Is it to be taken literally, as in over-eating? Or moderately in the sense of eating what one wishes to eat, what one feels like eating? Another dimension is the length of time for stuffing, or starving. One doctor interpreted the meaning of the words in the following recommendation:

> In mild colds diet does not play a very important part in the treatment. The patient may eat moderately of any wholesome food and feel none the worse for it. In severe colds accompanied by fever the diet should consist of liquids and soft, easily digested foods. The old proverb, "stuff a cold, starve a fever" is unsound in that a cold should not be fed anymore than is necessary. (Gallacher, 1942, p. 581)

This quotation introduces also a third aspect leading to polysemy: the ground beliefs into which the saying is inserted. In this case, the saying belongs to the domain of folk medicine and the interpretations must be understood in the context of the rise of modern medicine against folk wisdom. Gallacher concludes his article by saying:

> [The literal meaning] is the light in which the common folk understands it today and understood it years ago. The elliptical meaning is the viewpoint of those people somewhat better informed than the common folk, and it is they who read such a meaning into the proverb. (p. 580)

Further to the battle waged by modern medicine against folk remedies, a situation that will lead to a rejection of the proverb as unsound, the twin perspectives of *contraria contrariis curantur*, contraries cure contraries, and *similia similibus curantur*, like cures like, must be added. Those believing in homeopathy, that is, that minute doses of a medicine which would cause in a

healthy person the symptons of the disease treated, must be prescribed, (like curing like), would immediately discard the proverb "Stuff a cold, starve a fever" for its excesses. It would be considered unsound. The opposite view, contraries curing contraries, would accept the proverb and attempt its interpretations in that context. Polysemy is, then, perhaps primarily an insertion into a mode of thought. Following this insertion, sayings are interpreted in many ways at the level of syntax and lexicon. Traditional sayings are polysemic as two examples, "The exception proves the rule" and "Stuff a cold, starve a fever," have attempted to show.

Traditional sayings, then, despite a seemingly fixed status, do not escape the polysemy of language. Firth (in Seitel, 1969) states:

> The meaning of a proverb is made clear only when side by side with the translation is given a full acount of the accompanying social situation—the reason for its use, its effects, and its significance in speech. (p. 14)

Polysemy thus brings the discussion on traditional sayings to its crux: that of presenting the general (saying) into the particular. It is stated that sayings are clear only in the situation of usage. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1973, p. 821) gives the following elements for their interpretation: first, proverbs express relative rather than absolute truth; secondly, proverbs' meaning and truth are conditioned by the context; thirdly, proverbs that fit semantically may not be socially appropriate in terms of what the participants in the situation may wish to accomplish; fourthly, people tend to select proverbs on the basis of what the situation requires rather than on the proverb's semantic fit; and finally, situations can be evaluated in more than one way. These bring traditional sayings to the place of semantic interpretation: the situational context. Perhaps the best example of this is the saying: "Une hirondelle ne fait pas le printemps." When the situation from human to animal differs, the meaning also differs as illustrated by a cartoon in *Decormag* of April, 1978, where, for a cat, a swallow makes a good breakfast although it may not bring spring. Since the polysemic quality of traditional sayings is a much noted fact, it must now be asked what grounds polysemy and how pedagogy enters the scene. However, before pursuing the question, I would like to bring to bear at this central moment some examples as material for investigation.

The We-ness and commonness of traditional sayings have abundantly been presented. However, this "We" has not been delimited. "We" cannot mean everyone. "We" has, up to this point, been used to refer to the sense of being together, not alone, that sayings give. The learned-popular debate stands centrally to this issue by asking how We should be understood, as the popular, sometimes nonliterate mass, or as the intellectual élite? In order to again place form in a central position to this debate, two forms of sayings, proverb and maxim, will now be reviewed. Each refers to one of the poles in the debate between the popular and the learned.

C. The learned-popular debate through examples

The present section stems from an intuitive, inquisitive sense that in the relation between popular-learned and proverb-maxim lies a different manner of experiencing the We. The itinerary followed will be presented as a travelling rather than as hindsight—as it was experienced in the researching.

Some sayings are identified by paroemiologists and by stylists (in grammars or in dictionaries) as maxims, others as proverbs. The distinction has not been specifically made in the foregoing study. However, the form of the maxim is usually associated with learned exercise while proverbs are thought to belong to everyone (Barthes, 1957, p. 263; Cottom, 1980, p. 367). This section will take four sayings and divulge the experience we have of them in order to question the explanatory terms given by paroemiology and in order to bring out the participative sense we have of the sayings. This section will further the notion of We-ness that we have. Dictionaries were seen as the best places to obtain samples which enunciate a clear distinction between proverbs and maxims. I take a dictionary: the *Petit Larousse illustré* (1981). The itinerary followed will now be presented.

1. Proverbs and maxims

I leaf through the dictionary and reach the pink pages on foreign expressions: "Locutions latines, grecques et étrangères." Perhaps, proverbs and maxims will be

distinguished here. Yes! They are on page three III! And I find two maxims and two proverbs. I notice that the distinction and the frequency are not particular to this page only but recur throughout the pink pages. Hence, it is as representative an example as any. Then, on page three are the following:

Proverbs: (1) *Chi va piano, va sano*

Qui va doucement, va sûrement.

Proverbe italien. Il se complète par *chi va sano, va lontono* (qui va sûrement, va loin). Racine a dit (Les *Plaideurs*, I, 1): Qui veut voyager loin ménage sa monture.

(2) *De gustibus et coloribus non disputandum*

Des goûts et des couleurs il ne faut pas discuter.

Proverbe des scolastiques du Moyen Age, qui est devenu français. Chacun est libre de penser, d'agir selon ses préférences.

Maxims: (1) *Contraria contratiis curantur*

Les contraires se guérissent par les contraires.

Maxime de la médecine classique, en opposition avec celle de l'homéopathie: *Similia similibus curantur*. (Les semblables se guérissent par les semblables)

(2) *Divide ut regnes*

Divise, afin de régner.

Maxime poétique énoncée par Machiavel, qui a été celle du sénat romain, de Louis XI, de Catherine de Médecis. La forme la plus générale est: *Divide ut imperes* ou *Divide et imperia* (Divise et règne).

None of the above examples is unfamiliar; many of us have heard and perhaps used them in the past. The fact that they are a phenomenon (traditional saying) distinguished in two different genres will now be probed. Why should one saying be referred to a maxim while the other is seen as a proverb? The point here is not that, perhaps, *Le Petit Larousse illustré* has wrongly distinguished the specimens, but rather that the distinction *is* made today and that sayings are thought to fit into different genres although Loux and Richard state: "Il n'existe pas de

définition distinguant proverbe et maxime" (1978, p. 251). The repartition is often a-rational, that is, perhaps mysteriously instinctual, and Buridant makes a lengthy case of the situation by indicating how "wrong" reference to collectors can be when identifying genre (1976, pp. 377-391). He then advocates, as many others, a search for the internal constitutive elements of each genre. The conclusions are only half convincing and will be used as examples since the aim of this chapter is interpretive.

As was reported in chapter two, proverbs and maxims have evolved historically as genres relating to social classes and to the rise of a tasteful aristocracy. Cottom states:

> Virtually all eighteenth-century writers on aesthetics direct their arguments against certain proverbs: "*Chacun à son goût,*" "*De gustibus non est disputandum,*" and so on [...] Within eighteenth-century discourse on this topic one can see with particular clarity the extent to which the critical consciousness of the age is a defensive consciousness directed less to arguing what art is or should be than to arguing that *it is not and must not be popular—a property of the common people.* (1980, p. 367, emphasis added)

It was shown in chapter two that the maxim entered into association with socio-economic conditions and through taste took precedence over its more popular form: the proverb. The importance of this historical note is that sayings should be related to different classes and be classified accordingly. Hence, it is assumed that, out of the four sayings sampled, the fact that two are labelled maxims and the other two proverbs, historically, experientially, intuitively, if not rationally, they must express distinct conditions of saying.

2. Commonalities as experienced

The elements of form will now be reviewed in relation to the above four sayings. First, all sayings use ordinary language. There are no archaic nor technical terms used. The words are simple and could be used in everyday language. However, the precision to which the word "va" is put by Racine brings the saying into a past when horses or mules were the common means of traveling; "Ménager sa monture" is a reality that is no longer common within the Western World. Overall, the four sayings give a sense of familiarity with a language that brings confidence into the utterance. Familiarity, in this sense, is a commonness between the

receiver and the saying and, by extension, between receiver-saying and the world it presents.

Secondly, the above sayings are akin to spoken language in diction and rhythm. The acoustic memory of oral culture is present in three of the sayings. "Qui va doucement, va sûrement" displays repetition (the verb "va"), parallelism, as well as contrast of structure. The two parts of the saying repeat each other with the contrastive variation "doucement-sûrement." Similarly, "Les contraires se guérissent par les contraires" displays repetition. "Divise, afin de régner" presents also a contrast between division and control through the words "divise" and "régner." Repetition, contrast, and parallelism establish a correspondence between the parts of the sayings. Through mnemonic devices, the form of sayings divulges a unity of speech in which the parts answer each other; for example, going slowly is associated, through parallelism, with going surely. There is a correspondance between one quality of action and another: slowly and surely. The form itself has validated the truth of the association "slowly-surely." The two adverbs are intimately linked. A correspondence established by the form of language furthers the commonness explicited thus far by presenting the totality of a unit in form.

The orality of the sayings brings the entity of form to a larger entity: that of a world of participation and *hodos* (traveling). On one level, the sayings carry the hearer and user into participation, but a distinction is beginning to emerge. The so-categorized proverbs foster a more involved sense than maxims do. The whole being, body and mind, feels the going in "Qui va doucement, va sûrement," while a certain distanciation already occurred in "Divise, afin de régner." But, it is a matter of degree and the proverb "Des goûts et des couleurs, il ne faut pas discuter" is already more intellectualized and thus less holistic than "Qui va doucement...." Participation is a difficult notion to express. It is felt, but distanciation (or contemplation) gives a clue. In contemplation, to which "Divise, afin de régner" is closer, there is a break between the world, the body, and the mind. It happens that a stepping back has occurred and that the whole being is not acting *into* but rather *upon* the world. The participation-contemplation dialectic brings the discussion back to the I-We-They distinction.

The proverbs, through a greater participative stance, recreate the I and the They as We. On the other hand, maxims have effected a distance between I and They. "Divise, afin de régner" is an example where the advice is to separate into many They's in order to conquer. In conclusion, it is interesting to note that *Le Petit Larousse illustré* makes a distinction between proverbs and maxims based on their popularity. According to this source, the maxim is "une formule brève énonçant une règle de morale ou de conduite en une réflexion d'ordre général" (p. 620) while the proverb is "une maxime exprimée en peu de mots et devenue populaire" (p. 817). The degree of commonness expressed as popularity is an important distinction even at the level of definition.

On a second level and as a consequence of the participation-contemplation dichotomy, proverbs unfold as a journey (*hodos*). Through participation, and the commonness expressed by form, there is a going with the saying "Qui va doucement, va sûrement." It is an advice that follows and accompanies action. In comparison, "Divise et règne" stands apart as counsel that leads the itinerary followed by action. The path is more intellectually beaten in the maxim. Roland Barthes' comments are worth quoting here at length. In *Mythologies* (1957), he expresses well the distinctions sketched above in relation to the *hodos*:

> Le proverbe populaire, ancestral, participe encore d'une saisie instrumentale du monde comme objet. [...] Le proverbe populaire *prévoit* beaucoup plus qu'il n'affirme, il reste la parole d'une humanité qui *se fait, non qui est*. L'aphorisme bourgeois, lui, appartient au méta-langage, c'est un langage second qui s'exerce sur des objets déjà préparés. Sa forme classique est la maxime. Ici, le constat n'est plus dirigé vers un monde à *faire*; il doit couvrir un monde déjà fait, enfouir les traces de cette production sous une évidence éternelle: c'est une contre-explication, l'équivalent noble de la tautologie. (pp. 242-243, emphasis added)

Participation becomes clearer when the analogy of travel is expressed. Barthes speaks of the proverb as a grasping of the world from the perspective of a partaker in a new world. What happens is not that the creator *makes* a new world but that through a consciousness raising, "une prise de conscience," the world is modified, like the appearance of a traveller changes the picture just as the traveller is herself or himself changed. The total relationship is changed. In this sense humanity and world through the "saying" are constantly made anew. However, the maxim exhibits a different order of relationship with the world. It hints at explaining the

world, acting upon it. The perspective is not in-the-making but is already made: the journey is over, and as one reflects on it nothing can be changed any longer.

To illustrate further the difference between a world in-the-making, "qui se fait," and an already made world, we will now refer to inter-ethnic studies for we could question if the participation-contemplation distinction is the fruit of our contemporary Western World. No doubt that it is partly since it has been witnessed as the result of a particular European historical development. However, it is important to show its appearance, if only a timid one, in other cultures. Dan Ben-Amos in his article entitled "Ethnic genres" (1976) follows paromeological studies in their efforts to establish cross-cultural categories for genres. He concludes this review by taking the position that genres are strictly cultural: "The names of genres are indicative of the attributes people perceive in their verbal art forms. The interpretation of names of genres should not be literal" (p. 226). Yet, in his own efforts to hypothesize cross-cultural categories, he provides, as example, the Yoruba genre distinctions. These distinctions are partly presented in Table I. Although Ben-Amos does not offer examples of each genre, it can be noted that the *alo* category for amusement tells of a participative and more encompassing genre than the *itan* which stands above life by its directiveness. *Itan* is the itinerary plotted by elders and diviners in order to expose the truth and to direct action. It *is* an itinerary, a map of behaviour while *alo* is the "making" of the world: fiction. Even in the Yoruba's own genre distinction of traditional sayings can be detected the distinction made earlier between participation and contemplation. They stand in rough equivalence to proverbs and maxims. Furthermore, the Yoruba sayings introduce the next observation: the nature of the We.

The orality of sayings has begun to divulge separating trends where the proverb and the maxim differ. Following the above discussion, and returning to experience, the sayings begin to sketch the nature of We-ness. In the proverb, as in the Yoruba *alo*, the We is all encompassing, "popular" as is the expression. Everyone can, as a human being, feel at home in it. However, the We of the maxim and of the Yoruba *itan* distinguishes the We of the

Table I

Yoruba paradigms for *itan* and *alo*:

A situational description of genre usage		
Dimension	*itan*	*alo*
situational	ritual politics	amusement
narrator's status	old men diviners	any age any sex
attitude	truth: religious or historical	fiction

(Ben-Amos, 1976, p. 233)

popular people from the We of a smaller in-group. The maxim is deeply rooted in social distinctions. In order to feel at home within the saying "Divise, afin de régner" one has to be in a position of conquering or wishing power. It is no accident that the maxim is associated with rulers of governments: the Roman Senate, Louis XI, Catherine de Medicis, and Machiavelli. The We is inclusive of rulers, as in the royal We, but, in fact, it sets We and They apart. Similarly, "Les contraires se guérissent par les contraires" belongs to the world of medicine, where the doctor is an expert set against the background of the populace. The commonness expressed here brings together, doctors, healers, sorcerers, sorceresses, but it proposes a We of professional (so to say) affiliation against the They of the populace, the nonknowers. The maxim itself sets an ideology of separation through the importance of contraries versus the homeopathic ideology of similarities. In this manner, traditional sayings begin to elaborate distinctions that point the way to their nature.

The third element of form, brevity, is also present in the four examples above, and fourthly, syntax answers to the previous description given: simple, clear, and using the present or the imperative verb tenses. Not only is the syntax simple, but it has been simplified and abbreviated in two cases: "Qui" has been used as a quick reference to "quiconque," "n'importe qui," "une personne," etc. Likewise, "Divise, afin de régner," through the imperative, has changed the advise of "Si vous voulez régner, il faut diviser": it has become shorter, more direct, and less personal. The apparent nonpersonalness of the vocabulary has to be addressed again briefly. In all cases, the vocabulary (as subject or object) refers to *any* human being. Rogedem (1972) has noted the constant introduction of general terminology such as "never," "all," "nothing," "each," "none," "no one," "often," "rarely," "always." These terms are at times stated: "A dispute de maîtres, Peuple ne perd jamais" (Rogedem, 1972, p. 684). Scheven quotes and interprets the following Swahili proverb using the general term "all":

> All fish smell, but they suspected the mud-fish,
> A bad reputation always follows you. (1981, p. 440)

Often, the general terminology is understood rather than stated:

> Il n'est [jamais] nuage si sombre

qui ne soit [toujours] doublé d'argent, (Rogedem, 1972, p. 684)
Old friends and old wine are [always] best. (Kelly, 1879/1977, p. 41)

The short, compact characteristics of sayings are complementing elements of broad applicability: verb tense and general terminology. These remove the individual person from the sayings and situate the proverb or the maxim at a level of generality that could be called nonpersonalness.

In effect, this general vocabulary, through an appearance of nonpersonalness, achieves two aims. On the one hand, it allows for the identification of any person with the proverbs but filters whoever identifies with the maxim. Identification is always possible but to different degrees. On the other hand, the general language allows the commonality, the We, to pierce through the words by removing the I. The verb tense, furthermore, disjoins the actual, situational present from the general (paroemiologists say "universal") possibility. The brevity and the syntactical elements of sayings serve to create a general, nonpersonal mode of experiencing sayings. In so doing, the impetus is removed from the I, allowing for the common, the We, to enter the scene. In the Swahili proverb "It is better to have a bad thing than nothing at all," the terminology is general and the present is used. The general effect is that this is a statement applicable to one and all. It allows for a translation to "*I* had better have a bad thing than nothing at all." In the same vein though, the "*We think* that *you* had better have a bad thing than nothing at all" is also present. Similarly, the saying, in the end, tells us: "*We know* that *we* had better have a bad thing than nothing at all." Hence the generalness of syntax allows the We to become present in the advice to the I and the We.

Polysemy, the fifth element of form, will now be reviewed briefly in order to introduce the next section on metaphor. Thus far, the four elements studied have presented, commonly and separately, a world of sayings that fosters the We. However, through the distinction between the maxim and the proverb, a slight cracking of the commonness begins to be evident. In polysemy, the literal-metaphorical issue is central. When a saying can be interpreted on different levels, it is said to be metaphorical. It is interesting to note that Barley (1972, p. 742), Grattet-Duplessis (1847, p. 343), and Rogedem (1972, p. 694) divide maxims and

proverbs along such lines. For them, proverbs are like maxims in every respect except that the former is metaphorical. Out of the four examples given, only one is metaphorical: "Qui va doucement, va sûrement." Beyond the literal meaning of walking, riding, driving slowly in order to arrive at one's destination, the metaphorical meaning is interpreted, for example, by DesRuisseaux in the following manner: "Prendre soin de soi assure longue vie, pour dire de prendre soin de sa santé" (1978, p. 470). However, the three other sayings can be given more or less varied interpretations: they are polysemic although they are not metaphorical.

3. Metaphorical language: a question of presence and absence

The position adopted in this section follows Loux and Richard (1978) who state:

> Les doubles sens, les métaphores qui les caractérisent prennent appui sur la réalité du corps, s'enracinent en lui pour s'épanouir dans une profusion de *symboliques* qui le relient au reste de l'univers. (p. 8)

Metaphors are primarily embodied linguistic forms; they are anchored in material reality before they gain access to the symbolic universe of abstractions. They are also grounded in participation as we will now examine.

The concrete experience of metaphors

On a first level, metaphors speak to concrete experience: "C'est toujours la poule qui cacasse qui pond" (DesRuisseaux, 1978, p. 34). The metaphor starts here in the behaviour of domesticated animals observed in daily farm life. It enunciates the observation that hens cackle after laying an egg. This level is anchored in familiar experience and a comprehension of this meaning is indispensible to understanding:

> C'est à partir de ce sens, qui constitue une expérience de base incontestée, à laquelle on se réfère, que l'on peut tirer des conclusions, établir des normes concernant un plus large domaine. (Loux & Richard, 1978, p. 245)

It has been noted that psychologists found children to be unable to interpret metaphors. The child remains at the concrete level of interpretation. As an example, the saying "Its raining cats and dogs" was illustrated by a 10 year old child.The interpretation was literal: cats and dogs were falling from the clouds. Similarly, when the saying is to be attributed to an animal

mind, it is also presumed to be interpreted literally . An example found in the *Edmonton Journal Comics* of April 16, 1983, shows a dog interpreting the saying literally, in an almost offending manner to the dog, with cats and dogs falling out of the sky. It must be understood, however, that the concrete interpretation of a saying is of prime importance. This level, the concrete, the experiential, is the foundation level.

Mediate and immediate language

The nature of abstract and concrete languages will now be probed. Basing his study on Bernstein, Gobard, in *Aliénation linguistique* (1976), talks about mediate and immediate language:

> La thèse de Bernstein, c'est qu'il y a deux formes de socialisation: l'une offre à l'enfant un langage directement relié à son contexte immédiat, et l'autre donne un langage *abstrait* relativement indépendant du contexte. Il y a aussi deux codes différents: un code immédiat (restricted code) qui est adapté à la pensée particulariste et un code médiat (elaborated code) propre à la pensée universaliste. (p. 115)

The mediate code is speech so detached from the context that it becomes autonomous. Mediate speech is the language of technology and of the *Gesellschaft*. It attempts to be neutral, objective, and the property of everyone: a global language, if possible, devoid of numerous denotations. The language of paroemiology is often akin to mediate speech:

> For the greatest fault of the above set of data is that even if we find variants in the (B) level, but of the other structural levels we have no knowledge of variants. Yet in connection with these examples we should like to refer to the hypothetical form of a few bundles of variants. Accordingly, the (C), (D) and (E) levels of the above-mentioned proverbs may be grouped in the following direction. (Szemerkényi, 1972, p. 100)

Mediate speech is based on a rational (only) interpretation.

Immediate speech, on the other hand, is closer to the context and does not dwell primarily in logical articulations; it is a closed system of communication where the initiated gain understanding. Alan Dundes (1980, pp. 30-31) gives an example of this when he argues for the necessity to provide context for proverbs in collections. He notes that the Burmese proverb "I am not angry, but the buffalo's tail is shorter" is incomprehensible to us. What is unsaid is more important than what is said. It is only in the cultural context that the words said, the

"saying," will take on meaning. The following sheds some light for us:

> A farmer goes to the field to plow it. He works from morning to noon. He is hungry and waiting for his wife to bring his lunch. After a few hours, he cannot wait any longer. He cuts the tail off the buffalo which has been pulling the plow. He bakes it and eats it. The wife finally comes with his lunch and asks whether he is angry with her. He replies, "I am not angry, the buffalo's tail is shorter." (Dundes, 1980, pp. 30-31)

This rather humorous context is foreign to us, even very strange: it belongs to the initiated. How could we place ourselves in a context where, a man not a woman, may use the saying, where farming is the main preoccupation, where women are accustomed to men being angry at them for their actions or nonactions, where buffaloes roam, where meat can be cooked and eaten on the spot. Immediate speech focusses on the importance of contexts as a closed system of communication.

In the interaction between mediate and immediate speech, metaphor takes a special place:

> La symbolique de la parole immédiate opère *par condensation et aboutit à la métaphore* tandis que la symbolique de la parole médiate opère *par analyse et aboutit à la rationalité.*
> Ces deux codes ne s'excluent pas mutuellement mais sont choisis en fonction de la structure socio-culturelle où ils sont utilisés. (Gobard, p. 116, emphasis added)

When symbolization occurs in immediate speech, it tends to condense the participation in the world. It does this with metaphor as an end result. On the other hand, mediate speech condenses the elements into analysis and rational thinking.

The significance of Gobard's position for traditional sayings and metaphor is that it returns us to the proverb-maxim dichotomy. Through abstract language ("divise," "règne," "contraires," "semblables") maxims are closer to mediate language while proverbs are linked to immediate speech. The distinction based on metaphor is insightful and the question becomes: How can this dichotomy be understood? A second level of interpretion will further the interpretation.

On a second level and complementing the literal-metaphoric distinction, traditional sayings create a link between the situation and the possibility. Traditional sayings partake of the familiarity of everyday forms of speech. Proverbs exhibit, however, a participative mode

of experience while maxims display some elements of distanciation. Metaphoric language is also seen as participating in the world: the common and known world. Through association (Seitel, 1974), metaphors create a web of understanding. "Similarity" and "analogy" are key terms. This dimension is also expressed with the general-particular dialectic. For example:

> Les termes du proverbe établissent un va-et-vient entre le réel et l'imaginaire, on tord effectivement le cou de la poule mais non celui de la fille. (Loux & Richard, 1978, p. 249)

A metaphor is a general statement worded in particular, situational imagery. "Qui veut voyager loin ménage sa monture" expresses on a first, literal level the travelling situation and the necessity to take care of one's means of transportation. This experience displays a very real, concrete, particular, and participative level of language. Ortony (1975) states that metaphorical language is closer to experience: "Metaphors are closer to emotional reality for the same reasons that they are closer to perceptual experience" (p. 50). Metaphors are immediate language. Yet the saying is not exclusively situated in experience. A proverbial saying rooted in experience also expresses, in a general sense, the way the world should be. "Qui veut voyager loin ménage sa monture" is, beyond the literal and situational sense, a general statement of ethical value. The saying tells a "truth" about moderation and it directs immediate action. However, "Qui veut voyager loin ménage sa monture" also presents a world that is not situated: the general advice shows a general world. The metaphor of the proverb establishes a constant travelling between the literal (situation) and the nonliteral (general) meaning. To understand "Qui veut voyager...," the travel language has to mean something from experience, but through that literal meaning a more general (nonsituated) meaning presses upon us. In the metaphorical proverb, the literal and the nonliteral, the particular and the general, enter into a dialectic that leads to understanding.

What is the nature of the literal-nonliteral dialectic? In the literalness of the proverb lies the familiarity of experience, the totality of participation, the commonness of the world. In the nonliteral (image) lies the possibility not yet found in experience, the general statement of affairs, the direction to be taken. The nonliteral offers a view of the world that is not here

and now but which could be. The saying "Beggers must not be choosers" (Taylor, 1962, p. 5) could be taken literally, and, as such, it advises to notice opportunity when it comes. However, nonliterally, the saying refers to a world that could be by pointing out that, in any situation, one must heed its limitations. It opens the world of moderate dreams and expectations. It shows the possibility of action or acceptance even when the desire or the aim is still far away. The literal and the nonliteral both offer an ethical dimension, an advice for the right action. The ethical dimension of metaphorical language powerfully divulges new possibilities for action.

While the foregoing discussion has dealt with metaphorical proverbs, the terms of reference can be expanded to all traditional sayings. Holbek (1970) states:

> Its [proverb] form reflects this function [establishing a connection between an actual experience or situation and the body of traditional wisdom]: the proverb is, indeed—it must be—a general statement, very often embellished with artistic features that distinguish it from everyday speech. (p. 470)

Seitel also presents the same view in the following quotation:

> The proverb tends to, very predominantly, explain the more complicated through the more simple, less known through the better known, the mental through the physical, the ideal through the material, social through biological, abstract through concrete. (1977, p. 5)

Traditional sayings are general statements (Rogedem, 1972, p. 684; Ollier, 1976, p. 340). Their general nature, their generalness, has been much noticed by paroemiologists who mention the constant shuffle between the general and the particular in sayings. But they do not present satisfying interpretations. Meschonnic (1976, p. 421) makes an interesting note however. It is that sayings are an empirical attempt to order the world, "une tentative empirique de mettre le monde en ordre." This note can lead, despite its instrumental terminology, to a new interpretation. Let the following saying stand before us:

> Quand on n'a pas de tête,
> Il faut avoir des jambes. (Rogedem, 1972, p. 685)

The statement, as the syntax indicates, effects a time-withdrawal and fosters nonpersonalness. The subject is anyone, "on," and has no specific time of present, past, or future. It is general when compared to the sentence "Quand je n'ai pas de tête, il faut que j'aie des jambes." Yet,

the generalness of the saying doesn't prevent from deriving the situated interpretation applied to myself. What happens from the general to the particular? Initially, there is a recognition that the general saying prepares an ordering of relationships in-the-world (human and nonhuman elements). The saying, by the very act of saying, prepares, premonitions this ordering. "Quand on n'a pas de tête, il faut avoir des jambes" allows the person to enter the speaking and to recognize a relationship between foolish behaviour and the necessity to escape a situation. The sayings point the way by forecasting an order. This is generally called the ethical dimension of sayings. It points the way in a specific manner. This is the meaning of generalness as it applies to saying. It encompasses the notions of order, of relationship in-the-world, of ethics, and of *pre*-sayings as in the pro-verb, the admonition forecasting the action.

Metaphorical proverbs identify clearly the two poles of the literal-nonliteral dialectic by presenting a statement that can be taken literally or that can be interpreted as a general statement. Nonmetaphoric sayings, for example maxims, express the nonliteral (general) statement, but they refer implicitly to the situational. "Les contraires se guérissent par les contraires" is a general, ethical statement on how to heal ailments. It refers to a body of knowledge about the world. Primarily, however, it calls forth the literalness of the situation: elements that react against each other like fire and water, heat and cold. It also brings to importance the situation of usage. In this case, one pole of the dialectic is lived as a situation (literal) while the other is expressed as an abstract statement (nonliteral). It is a play between presence and absence, each answering to the other. The general, nonliteral is present, and it is pointing to the literal, situational that is absent.

From the above discussion on metaphor, polysemy, and familiarity, some conclusions can be drawn in order to introduce the next section on the pedagogic voice of language. First, through ordinary language and orality the form of traditional sayings presents a common world where the We intercedes between the I and the They. Secondly, participation is restored as basic to sayings in the *hodos*, the travelling experience. Thirdly, polysemy, after brevity,

demonstrates a dialectic between the commonality of experience and the new possibilities that a general statement offers. But foremost, polysemy is grounded in the situation. Fourthly, the verb tense of sayings effects a transference between the situational and the general by withdrawing the time framework into a universal time, or by erasing considerations of time. Fifthly, the distinction between the maxim and the proverb modifies the We-ness of commonality by distinguishing the socio-economic basis that roots the separation of genre. On the one hand, the We is a community of scholars, knowers, or initiates. While on the other hand, the We is everyone: the populace, the masses. One is more restrictive than the other in its encompassing grasp. Finally, metaphor evidences a play between presence and absence, between the literal, participative experience within the more obviously general statement known as the maxim. The discussion will now turn to the pedagogic voice expressed in the above conclusions.

D. The pedagogic voice of traditional sayings expressed through structure and meaning

Let the following quotations by Rollo May introduce and guide this section on pedagogy:

> The importance of language in an evolving culture is that it provides *symbolic forms* by means of which we can reveal ourselves and by means of which we stand revealed to others. Communicating is a way of understanding each other; if there are no such ways, each of us becomes like the man who, in a dream, finds himself wandering in a foreign country where he can understand nothing of what is being said around him nor feel anything from the person next to him. His isolation is great, indeed. (1972, p. 14)
>
> *Experience* puts the accent on action, living out something, we let its meaning penetrate through us on all levels: feeling, acting, thinking, and, ultimately, deciding, since decision is the act of putting one's total self on the line. The passion for experience is an endeavour to include more of the self in the picture; one experiences as a totality. (1972, p. 76)

May's notion of "experience" expresses well the stance taken in this study. Experience is not a facile catchword to be thrown into a discussion in order to reinstitute an individual perspective. On the contrary, to experience is to live learning on all levels of human action, as a total human being. To experience is also to communicate, in the sense that May uses the latter term. In experiencing, there is a revelation of the world, of others, and of the human being. This

revelation is called communication. The totality of the world and communication become synonymous with learning.

Within this framework, pedagogy enters as leading the learner. This leading can be exemplified "within a spirit of letting" learning take place in the learner. To paraphase Heidegger, pedagogy lets "nothing else be learned than learning":

> The real teacher, in fact, lets nothing else be learned than—learning. His conduct, therefore, often produces the impression that we really learn nothing from him, if by "learning we now automatically understand the procurement of useful information". (1977, p. 356)

However, the pedagogic leading must take into account the totality of the experience of learning. At this point the question becomes, what is learning? Learning is the meeting between the individual perspective and the inhabited world; it is the I thrown into new possibilities. It is also the world pressing upon the I, and the They coming in contact with the I. At the heart of this notion of learning lies a dialectic mode: learning is a constant shuffling, back and forth, between the I and the They.

In the previous analysis on the form of traditional sayings, dialectical notions were presented. They are shown in Table II. In each category presented, be it polysemy, metaphor, maxim-proverb, ordinary language, or orality, the two poles of the dialectic answered to each other. Traditional sayings offered a constant travelling from one pole to the other. The very form of sayings, in its structure and meaning, revealed this dialectic. The voice of that dialectic is the pedagogic voice of language. First, traditional sayings intimated a constant transfer between the particular and the general. They are general statements rooted in familiar language. A correspondence is further presented by the situatedness of metaphorical sayings although sayings express a universal (general) state of affairs. In speaking proverbially, one introduces in the personal situation of usage a language that reflects the experience of tradition. Hence, the nonpersonal is introduced at the center of the personal: the They is brought to the I. These elements reflect the dialectic general-particular. Learning is also a bringing of the general to the particular. However, the most important insight that the dialectic proposes is the centrality of the We in traditional sayings. The dialectic I-They brings to the foreground

Table II

Résumé of notions associated with the form of traditional sayings

General notions and characteristics of the form of traditional sayings	Dialectical attributes and issues		
	They	Common grounds	I
1. polysemy	general		particular
	nonpersonal	We	personal
	universal		situated
	They		I
2. metaphor	nonliteral		literal
	mediate	dialectical	immediate
	learned	complementarity	popular
	maxim		proverb
3. ordinary language	unfamiliar	learning	familiar
4. orality	con templative		participative
	hindsight	experience	traveling
	written		oral
		communication	

the sense of commonality. In the dialectic shuffling emerges a greater entity, a more encompassing sense: the We. This notion of the We is central to pedagogy. It affirms that commonality provides a benevolent sense to learning. The We is an abandonment to the leading: a confidence in the travelling.

Secondly, since experiencing and learning are in effect participation in dialectic with contemplation, pedagogy must heed this dimension. Through their features grounded in orality, traditional sayings restore participation within language. The completeness of the oral reference brings a sense of entering into an activity rather than exclusively contemplating it. Pedagogy demands that the importance of participation be restored.

Thirdly, the very language of traditional sayings exhibited a quality of dialectic between the literal and the nonliteral. Since it is founded on ordinary, familiar, and often concrete vocabulary, a saying is firstly appealing to the whole person. It is situated and contextualized. However, expressing another world, another possibility out of the present context, offers a complementary newness which pulls away from the previous position: it is learning. Through the literal, and we should understand here, the "real," sayings draw to the possible, the potential, and the new. This is the apport of the literal-nonliteralness of metaphor. Bauman, in different terminology, expresses the same dialectic:

> Words, if understood, tell us how to go on. There is no understanding without experience to which the object can be referred but the obverse relation holds as well: the meaning is accessible only together with experience. (1978, p. 222)

In *résumé*, the pedagogical voice expressed through sayings starts in the situational. Sometimes it is clearly expressed, as in metaphors, while other times it is intimated by the commonality of a We, as in maxims. However, the presence of the general, the nonsituational, pulls the situational into a new world, which heretofore was *unknown*. Yet the unknown is never totally such. The general, nonsituational is also, at the same time, pulled to the situation, and so the circle continues. Learning occurs. But learning is also communication. The term stems from the Latin word *communicare*. It belongs to the family of *meare* words and is kin to circulation, back and forth travelling. Communication is a back and forth travel between I and They that

finds a home in commonality, in togetherness. Schmitt (1969) commenting on Heidegger says:

> We understand each other because we all say more or less the same things. Communication rests on shared opinions and common beliefs. (p. 250)

Pedagogy is joined to communication.

E. Conclusion

The aim of the following conclusion is to recapitulate this chapter on the form of traditional sayings by presenting a variation on the familiar, academic language of this study. It is offering a more poetic language.

Sayings point to language as a specific mode of offering tradition. Words, as they penetrate us, lull and yet awaken us.

"Know Thyself," "All cats are grey in the dark," "Out of sight, out of mind," are received without excruciating questioning. The common, everyday diction and vocabulary dwell in our familiarity with language. The style is straight-forward, the syntax is clear. The verbs are of the broadest applicability: the imperative and the present indicative. Sometimes, a catch or a jingle, an alliteration or a contrast, fosters remembering. Insidiously, the domain of everyday language seems too familiar to question, but then it is a singularity of language to be everpresent and everforgotten. Its presence points elsewhere like a weathervane. Language as form, as shape, as object, actively structures experience. Prereflectively, we live a "hunch" that in some situation, in the classroom, for example, our children are seen as all the same, without interest in uniqueness. "All cats are grey in the dark" offers a predication for the intuition, but the very words proclaimed shape the intuition, give it directiveness, and we see descending upon our children the "malefic" shadow of sameness. The very word "dark" shapes our disapproval.

"Know Thyself." At the interstice of tradition and language lies an in-forming power as institutive of our consciousness. Both direct prereflectively by singing a tale of familiarity. Yet, the siren's song leads to the possibility for awakening. Through a rigid, fixed form and everyday vocabulary, traditional sayings are semantically loose. "Know Thyself": Yes, we

know, but do we know as Carlyle did? "The folly of that impossible precept 'Know Thyself' till it be translated into this partially possible one 'Know what thou canst work at'." His reformulation of knowledge of self as limitation is an indication of the possibility of interpretation. The traditional saying predisposes thought, not as a need for its survival but as a call, as exigencies of a future. The paradox lies in that, without wishing its survival in its original form, the traditional saying does survive, often undeterred. And its power is the power of language: to form, to in-form, and to call-forth.

Language is the *causa formalis*, the form, the shape into which our encounters with traditional sayings are executed, and in this cause lies the paradox of familiarity pressing newness, of lullings encouraging awakenings: that is pedagogy.

VI. Function, usage, and situation: an interpretation of text and context

A. Introduction

Traditional sayings are not only objectifications like the words "tradition" and "saying." Traditional sayings are uttered and used in everyday life, in classrooms, in advertising, in poetic writing, or in conversations. In this study, traditional sayings have been approached from two perspectives: tradition and formalized language. Although the situatedness of sayings was always present, the research has focussed thus far on the essential characteristics of tradition and language as they are presented in the phenomenon of saying with the words of tradition. Situatedness became a restoration of a total situation rather than the description of actual situations of usage. Situatedness can be seen and lived in situations where someone speaks to others. This is the direct contact relationship of actual usage. However, before attempting to uncover the actual usage situations, the chapters on tradition and language have expressed the human presence emerging from and within language or tradition. The voice of the We restores humans within the fibers of notions like language and tradition. These notions have lost the lived sense of relationships that we have in the usage situations. The relationships that language and tradition disclose between individuals and collectivities are not often seen as being in the We. In this sense, situatedness became a revival of a human mode of relating beyond actual presences. In chapters four and five, situatedness restored the totality of relationship in order to include the presence, in the apparent absence of others in objectifications. We now turn to the moments of specific usage. The majority of paroemiological research focusses on the actual usage situation of traditional sayings. It brings to the notion of situation a very specific orientation: that of functionalism.

Functionalism in paroemiology, as in other fields, brings with it the domain of cause and effect. Action is directed towards certain effects: the end, the goal, the objective, or the purpose. Such terminology already intimates the existence of an agent, a person setting action into motion. Thus, intentionality enters the scene. Researchers generally ask two main

questions: Who uses traditional sayings? and, When are traditional sayings used? The answers, from anthropology, history, folklore, and literature, are derived from ethnographic types of research and dwell in *la parole* orientation.

In this chapter, I will examine the relationship between the phenomenon of traditional sayings and the situational sense of usage. I take my point of departure in the intending agent, on the one hand, and the *telos*, or end of usage, on the other. Heidegger, after Aristotle, calls these the *causa efficiens* and the *causa finalis* (1977, p. 290). The *causa efficiens* is the agent, the person who states a saying and causes a saying to be in our midst. The word "agent" does not merely refer to the person who acts or has the power to act (Funk & Wagnalls, 1966, p. 27). The word also revives its latin root of *agere* where one presses something ahead as a shepherd would direct a flock (Picoche, 1979, p. 27). The agent is the initiator and the guide. It is important to note that the agent is neither a manipulator, nor a dictator. As Heidegger puts it, the agent is "that from whence" comes the actualized (used) traditional sayings. At the same time, the direction that the saying has taken in the world, the situation, is the *causa finalis*, the *telos*. The agent has set in motion, consciously or not, the unfolding of a phenomenon. The aim of this chapter is to bring together cause and effect, agent and intention, into an unfolding which takes into account the relationship I-They-world that underlies them. The Yoruba proverb "Proverbs are the horses of speech; if communication is lost we use proverbs to find it" (Priebe, 1971, p. 26) is enlightening. It sets usage not only in terms of cause and effect but, rather, fundamentally, in terms of a restoration of commonness: *commun*-ication.

The usage of traditional sayings will be introduced through a brief review of the functions of language from the perspective of linguistics and from Henri Gobard's (1976) cross-cultural perspective. It will then provide the general findings of paroemiologists in usage. Four general usage situations will be retained: communion, description, prescription, and exploration. The first part will be presented in order to establish a workable framework for the discussions of this chapter. It also establishes a link between the categorizing of usage

relationships as labelled in linguistics and in cross-cultural studies and the many actual usage situations observed by paroemiologists. This cross-referencing permits the assertion, as stepping grounds, of four general types of usage situations and leads to an interpretation of the term "usage" as an interplay between text and context. The second part of this chapter will examine, each in turn, the four usage situations retained and will recast these within a relationship between a text and a context (including agent and goal). Various examples will be offered. First, traditional sayings can be shown to foster a communion or union in common of participants in the saying event. In this chapter, mottos will be used as examples to show that a lived sense of solidarity, of commonness, is experienced. We-ness has been a major theme in the notion of tradition (see chapter four). It now reappears as basic to the experience of using sayings. The attitude of protection that We-ness evidences is part of the pedagogic voice of sayings.

Secondly, the usage of descriptive sayings offers a mode of experiencing that sets a text along with a context. The key word of this section is the word *con*, meaning going along with. While We-ness expresses a unity, a oneness, *con* tells of a harmonious separation. The text of the saying is separate, apart from the context because the text is cast into formalized language (see chapter five). Yet, the saying runs along with the context, the situation, by offering a cognitive grasp on the world, naming past observations, classifying situations, condensing experiences. At the same time, the saying guides experiences and actions in a pedagogic way by standing with, con-curring with, the situation without forcing itself as the only recourse. Descriptive sayings allow openness of action. This section offers a perspective of harmony that must be considered if pedagogy as a being with others is to be felt.

Thirdly, prescriptive usage of traditional sayings brings to a crux the dialectic between union and separation. Prescriptive sayings precede experiences and name the rules of behaviour. They mobilize language into a potential domination of a situation, a context. The situation may loose its power of uniqueness before the text. This disjointedness between text and context is studied through a contrastive presentation of a traditional saying and a slogan.

The slogan separates text and context, sells according to the intent of the user, favours ambiguity of goals, and seeks to dominate. The prescriptive traditional saying studied as an example restores the dialogue between text and context, seeks communication. Between the examples given lies a thin demarcation line of pedagogic/nonpedagogic relationships. This section concludes that the pedagogic voice of prescriptive traditional sayings is heard in an attentiveness to context and, thus, in communication and dialogue.

Fourthly, exploration is presented as the concluding category of usage situations. Exploration takes its point of departure in the observation that many writers transform traditional sayings in order to make them fit into the writers' expressive contexts. Jean Starobinski's notion of poetry is explored in order to show how poetic language is a pedagogical call. In the quest to answer the call emerges a dialectic between I-We-They, old-new, which serves as a paradigm of liberation. In exploration, the importance of situatedness is contrasted with unity. Liberation is always a liberation from: situatedness or unity, I or We.

Together, the four usage situations of traditional sayings express different relationships between union and separation. Communion is a complete union in common while description establishes a parallelism of text and context; it is a harmonious balance between union and separation. Prescription shows how separation, masked as union, could overpower the situation. Finally, exploration provides the insight that, in order to be united, separation also has to occur. The four usage situations constantly express terms of relationships and dispositions. Okezie's (1977) observation that inherent in traditional sayings usage is a play between protection and domination will be the *Leitmotiv*.

B. An interpretation of usage, function, and situation

1. Definition of function

Many linguists and theorists, including Roman Jakobson (1963/1971), have attempted to classify what they see as the functions of language. A look at this trend of categorizing

functions, or the "business" that an object fulfils, delimits the parameters that were and are guiding functionalist studies in paroemiology, and it provides for a generalized perspective which we can, in turn, question for its exclusions. Customarily, six functions are identified in speech: a sentence can be referential, expressive, incitative, poetic, phatic, and/or metalinguistic (Reboul, 1980; Yaguello, 1981). Each label, in turn, attempts to describe a set of interactional situations, of relationships. The referential function describes an utterance that informs, explains, and teaches something to someone while the expressive function describes a message that refers to the speaker: it is a sincere or false expression of self. The incitative utterance gives a command, an order, an advice, and is directed to action. The poetic function takes into account the play with language: it dwells in connotations rather than in denotations. The phatic function reminds us that speech is often uttered in order to establish, maintain, or cut contact: "Hello, do you hear me?" is an example. And the metalinguistic function refers to speech about speech, like a descriptive grammar . Although only six functions are identified, an utterance can exhibit one, two, or perhaps more of these functions.

The above terse exposition of the functions of language according to the linguistics of Reboul (1980) and Yaguello (1981), after Jakobson, gives initial shape to the elements of speech functions. Essentially, the following all enter into play: the speaker, the importance of connotation and of denotation, the world, the degree of emphasis on subsequent action, the hearer, the closeness of the community, and the rational sophistication of hearer and speaker. Gobard (1976) has reformulated the above elements into four categories that hold, in his opinion, for a cross-disciplinary perspective encompassing linguistics, sociology, history, ethnography, and anthropology. His approach attempts to answer the questions: What is language, and what does it do? He thus distinguishes betweeen four types of language functions: vernacular, vehicular, referential, and mythical. His terminology is slightly different from Reboul's and is at times misleading because he gives new interpretations to old terminology: the word "referential," for instance, as will be explained later. However, he has achieved an interesting perspective that brings the findings of linguistics in contact with a more

holistic (situational) point of view. At the same time, he does not ignore function and agent, which are notions dear to linguists and paroemiologists. Before introducing the paroemiological research specifically related to the functions of traditional sayings and the categories thereby identified, a brief description of Gobard's categories follows.

The interest in Gobard's position begins in, as chapter five indicates, his first distinction between mediate and immediate speech. The dialectic "detachability from" and "participation in" the situation, the context, grounds his thinking. Gobard identifies first a vernacular language (1976, p. 34). This is the spontaneous, local speech of mediation, of exchange, and of contact. Its function is to provide for communion rather than communication. He reformulates Basil Bernstein's "restricted speech code" in the following terms: vernacular language needs to use less "words" than the vehicular language because communion is present with half-words, "se parler à demi-mots." Hence, the vernacular language is closely tied to the speech context, and its function is to unite speakers. It is immediate and not easily detachable from the situation.

On the other hand, the vehicular language (mediate speech) aims at communication in the sense of giving information, description, or objective knowledge. It is the language of the *Gesellschaft* as opposed to the language of the *Gemeinschaft*, the primary group (Gobard, p.36). The vehicular language tends to be more universal, presents itself as objective or neutral, and belongs to everyone: that is, to the mass of individuals devoid of their specificities.

Thirdly, Gobard identifies referential language. It is a misleading term for those who, following linguistics, immediately associate referential to the referent, the object referred to, as in Reboul's categories. This latter meaning of referential, in Gobard's terminology, is closer to vehicular. For Gobard, the term "referential" designates the ostensive function of a language to refer to a cultural body of knowledge reactivated by speech. Referential language is tied to traditions, oral and written, which assure the continuity of value and knowledge systems from the past. This function of language identified by Gobard is the very fabric of traditional

sayings (see chapter four). It is also within this function that Gobard places the plays with language, the puns. Because a tradition is solidly established, it is possible to play with it, manipulate it according to whims, fancies, and interests. This function rejoins the play function ("fonction ludique" in Yaguello, 1981, pp. 30-37) and the poetic function by noting the opening of new possibilities in reference to the past.

Finally, with the term "mythical" language Gobard introduces the dimension of power in language. This language is undisputed, power-laden, because it has a direct link with an a-temporal situation, "une mise hors du temps." The expression "abracadabra" joins the speaker with an absent power. The Bible relates that God said, "Let there the light" and that there was light. The words performed a magic role that had power over nature and darkness. Such language brings an all powerful past/future to control the here-and-now. Mythical language is the language of verbal magic, incantations, prayers, and slogans, whose impact is thought to be mysteriously powerful. It is a language that commands.

To conclude the background to the categorization of language functions in linguistics and in a cross-disciplinary perspective, Table 111 is presented. It brings out the essential elements relevant to the discussion of traditional sayings that follows. It also extrapolates basic relationships to usage situations and permits the view that, essentially, Reboul and Gobard name four attitudes of saying with the words of tradition.

The common denominators from the perspective of relationship, as shown in Table 111, reveal that cross-references between Gobard and Reboul are possible. These denominators further present four major ways of relating the functions of language to a usage situation. From an abstract, categorizing stance, the common denominators designate attitudes that link diverse elements: I, We, They/others, and world. Spontaneously, the notions treated in chapters four and five emerge. First, there is a communion relationship found in the vernacular (Gobard) and the phatic (Reboul) functions that places the We in a prominant position: it brings togetherness between I/They/You. Secondly, there is a language of description that predicates and proclaims the world/others. Implicitly, the relationship is

Table III

Functions of language in Gobard (1976) and Reboul (1980):

A *résumé* of categories and common denominators

Functions according to Reboul (1981)	Common denominators	Functions according to Gobard (1976)
1. phatic	communion We, I, and You/They	1. vernacular
2. expressive 3. referential 4. metalinguistic	description, proclamation I, and this/world We, and this They and this	2. vehicular
5. incitative	prescription, imperative I upon You We upon others/world	3. mythical
6. poetic	exploration I, We, and past or other possibilities (worlds)	4. referential

between I/We/They, and the world/others in the sense that human agents, alone or together, describe their world and/or others. Thirdly, there is a relationship of prescription in which the imperative mode commands others. The I/We is in a position to dominate (or wishes to dominate) others/world. Control and power underlie this relationship. Finally, there is a relationship of exploration where We/I search for past/new possibilities, new worlds, new alternatives, which might be "inhabited" as Ricoeur puts it (see chapter three). The perspective of relating humans (I/We/They) and world/other into four functions or usage situations further allows the perception that, when traditional sayings are interpreted within a cross-relationship between I/We/They/world/others, traditional sayings are texts bearing upon a concurrent text or context. When function and usage become linked to a disposition, an attitude, a guiding with a text and intending agents upon the world and others, the sense of being in the situational usage is restored. *La langue* and *la parole* are joined as they are in experience. The language of traditional sayings becomes a way of being.

From the above presentation, the following definition of usage and function will stand as a reminder of the *Leitmotif* of this chapter: usage and function will refer to the interaction between text and context as guided by an intending agent: I/We/They. Usage takes a text, a traditional saying, with its form and its content (tradition) and then places the text into a con-text. Con, from the Latin *com*, etymologically means together. Text, from *textere*, refers to weaving. Hence, con-text alludes to the weaving together of situational elements. Con-text is con-current with the text, it weaves the text within the situation. Function and usage can best be expressed by affirming the change that they incur; when a context is present, it is a situation of interconnectedness between the diverse elements of I, We, They. A text is introduced. This text changes the interconnectedness between the elements of the context. Usage and function, as notions, seek to express the direction of this change: communion, description, prescription, or exploration. For the purpose of this chapter, the above definition will guide a discussion of the direction that a text like traditional sayings gives to a context.

While the above definition can be used as a point of departure to study any form of language, or even language in general, it must be kept in mind that the text in this case is of a particular nature. It is the text of a traditional saying with its specific form (as seen in chapter five), and its content (as seen in chapter four). Hence, the analysis that follows does not apply to language *per se* but to the language of traditional sayings. The distinction here is that traditional sayings are a formulaic language:

> C'est pourquoi la sagesse ne suffit pas à décrire ni ce qu'est ni ce que fait un proverbe. Un proverbe s'inscrit dans une situation, et il inscrit en lui, par la fixité de sa formule, cette situation, —ce qui le spécifie par rapport à d'autres activités de discours qui sont seulement inscrites dans leur situation. (Meschonnic, 1976, p. 426).

Speech emanates from the situation. A sentence becomes unique and creative. It is a combination of particular elements: *la parole*. When I wrote the above sentence, it was unique, but had I written "A mocking bird has no voice of its own" (Forster, 1980, p. 162), I would have drawn an already formulated, fixed utterance into the midst of a unique discourse. Because they are pre-fixed and collectively known, traditional sayings are not uniquely formed in usage. At that moment, they partake of *la langue*. But where they are spoken in a situation, and a situation is always unique, then they are speech, and they partake of *la parole*. Traditional sayings are both, and at the same time, *la langue* and *la parole*. Traditional sayings pull formalized language and bring it to bear on a context. They weave the text as extraneous into the situation. There is a reciprocal interaction between the form of language, its tradition, and the situation. The notion of the situatedness of traditional sayings must then take into account the interplay between *la langue* and *la parole*.

2. Usage in paroemiological research: literature and social context

In 1980, Alan Dundes published a chapter entitled "Texture, Text and Context" in his book *Interpreting Folklore*. The three passwords that he used, texture, text, and context, provide a comprehensive summation of paroemiological research. First, the linguistic research examines the texture of folklore and sayings. The texture is the language, the specific phonemes and morphemes employed. The textural features, of proverbs for example, include

rhyme, stress, tone, onomatopoeia, and alliteration (Dundes, 1980, p. 22). The texture of the saying "Coffee boiled is coffee spoiled" is not translatable into other languages. The proverb probably will not rhyme in another language. The second feature of a saying, its text, is translatable. Text, for Dundes, refers to the specific version or recitation of the saying. Text is the unique appearance of a saying. It is its form as used in *la parole*. Finally, the context refers to the "specific social situation in which that particular item is actually employed" (p. 23). Context calls for a broad view of usage, including cultural values, history, and norms.

The main argument advanced by Dundes is that all three, texture, text, and context, must be analyzed in order to provide genre distinctions of folklore, but his interest is in a parallel analysis that will further the structuralist's aim of defining unique features of each folkloristic manifestation, including traditional sayings. Dundes, by presenting this argument, establishes the role of categories in studying sayings: text is considered as parallel to, not in relationship with, context and/or texture. Each category is autonomous, separate, and distinct. Paroemiological research on context is similar. In studying context, researchers propose to define one aspect of sayings: the functions that they serve in usage. Function answers the following perspective:

> Usually, function is an analyst's statement of what (he thinks) the use or purpose of a given genre of folklore is. Thus one of the functions of myth is to provide a sacred precedent for present action; one of the functions of proverbs is to provide a secular precedent for present action. (Dundes, 1980, p. 23-24)

Function is an operational term to explain the workings of a saying in a situation. Three major situations are identified in paroemiological research on function: literature, social context, and modern life. We will now turn to Wolfgang Mieder's excellent bibliography (1982) in order to discern the relative importance of each situation.

Under the rubric of "use," well over half of the research, both articles and books, study traditional sayings in literary works. In fact, it accounts for 64 percent of the articles written in French or in English. These studies deal with particular usage of sayings by writers, from the Greek Aeschylus (Robertson, 1939) to American writer Carl Sandburg (Mieder, 1973) or Nigerian Chinua Achebe (Shelton, 1969). However, the vast majority of literary research

deals with writers from the Renaissance to the nineteenth century. The interest of these studies is to discover how writers use sayings in literature. Paroemiologists, in general, identify all the occurrences of traditional sayings, proverbs, maxims, or riddles in one work. Then, the context of usage is examined in order to provide an explanation as to how a particular writer uses these sayings. In conclusion, these studies are restricted in scope, and meticulous. They are of interest to us in as much as they provide an overview of the perspective of usage by writers. However, by their very existence and the importance of their number, they tell about a domain of usage that Gobard (1976) defined as referential, and Reboul (1980) as poetic: that is, the domain of exploration, the text becoming an exposition of new possibilities for the context.

The second area of usage research deals with what has been called "studies in cultural anthropology" (Dundes, 1980, p. 23). Traditional sayings are seen as strategic social mechanisms. These studies, using an ethnographic methodology, collect samples of sayings in use. The samples are then interpreted within the context of usage. They range over varied geographical areas and include so called "primitive" as well as modern societies: the Jews of the Near East and of Yemen (Jason, 1971), the Igbo (Okezie, 1977) and the Haya (Seitel, 1974, 1977) of Africa, the Afro-American slave (Roberts, 1978). These paroemiologists explain usage as a social event. They find that, "in the day by day social context, the proverb seems to be used to oil the wheels of the social machine along with other traditional oral and kinetic expressions" (Jason, 1971, p. 617). Sayings, in this context, describe and prescribe social assertions or commands (Jason, 1971; Seitel, 1974). For example, Jason states that sayings sum up life experience as in the saying "When the ox is falling, the knife comes nearer" (Jason, p. 619). This descriptive saying states metaphorically that whoever has bad luck and is weakened by circumstances will more easily be the prey of others. Yet, sayings are also prescriptive: "If you want to live—die," "Eat what you please, but dress as people do" (Jason, p. 619). Descriptive and prescriptive sayings act, in her opinion, to foster or suppress the social behaviour of individuals. Traditional sayings are social strategies. They facilitate role

enactment in conflict situations (Okezie, 1977). Ben-Amos concludes in this way:

> all of these conceptions of genres view them as effective forms in society, having distinct rhetorical properties that enable them to fulfill their functions and providing a system of checks and balances for socio-cultural interactions. (1976, p. xxiv)

The importance of the above cultural anthropological research is that it expresses, from an ethnographic perspective and thus hopefully from within the culture itself, the two functions of language that Reboul and Gobard initiated. We are then in a position to say, at the onset, that description and prescription can be useful categories to foster a discussion of the interrelationship of text and context.

The third area of situational research deals with modern Western usage of sayings in magazines and advertising. In English language research, Wolfgang Mieder is a leader. However, German and Swiss research has been much more prolific in this respect as evidenced by Mieder's *International Proverb Scholarship, An Annotated Bibliography (1982)*. Sayings in magazines and advertising disclose a domain of relationship between text and context that transforms the prescriptive sayings into slogans. Sayings become a mechanism in a power struggle between the persuader and the persuaded.

To conclude this section on research dealing with function or usage of traditional sayings, two assertions can be made. First, research rejoins the domains of usage that were expressed as starting points through Gobard and Reboul. Paroemiological research on usage indicates, through situational analyses, that sayings are used to explore (literature), to describe, and to prescribe (cultural anthropology). But, their communion function, their phatic role, is notoriously absent as a theme of research. The question is then: Do traditional sayings foster communion? This is the question which will be addressed in the next section.

Secondly, usage paroemiological research, while concentrating on actual events, does not foster a correspondence between text, texture, and context. The form and the meaning of the sayings become extraneous when usage is ethnographically explored. Conversely, situations are ignored when the form of language is studied. As in Dundes' argument, texture and text are parallel to, not within, the context. This research separates *la parole* from *la langue*. The

task is now to relate *la langue* to *la parole*, so to speak, in order to interrelate the text, as formalized language and as tradition (seen in chapters four and five), with the context.

C. Usage as the interrelation between text and context

The focus of this section is to question what happens when the text of traditional sayings, with its tradition and form, is introduced into a context of usage by an agent. Four different types of context usages have been delimited: communion, description, prescription, and exploration.

1. Communion and traditional sayings

The primary ontological status of language

The primary ontological status of language is to affirm and confirm existence. Lacan (1966) states: "La fonction pure du langage est de nous assurer que nous sommes, et rien de plus" (p. 249). At a first level, individual existence is confirmed. In this sense, and assuming that Descartes' *cogito* meant thought through language, the *cogito ergo sum* is an affirmation of existence through language. To speak, independently of the meaning profferred, is to affirm that one exists. The very act upholds one's sense of being. It negates nothingness or nonexistence. The biblical saying "And the Word was made flesh" speaks to the power of the Word. In the Christian beliefs, the Word of God creates and gives life. On the other hand, we could add "And the flesh was made word" in the sense that language is a mode of being, word and flesh are one. The first status of language lies in ontology. For traditional sayings, the primary status of language as ontological means that saying with the words of tradition is first of all an affirmation of the speaker's existence. However, since tradition is so deeply enmeshed in the saying, it also confirms the existence of others.

The corollary of solidarity

When Lacan's words are repeated, "La fonction pure du langage est de nous assurer que nous sommes, et rien de plus," another dimension is evidenced. It becomes clear that he referred to more than individual existence: "nous assurer que nous sommes." The We of the expression now resonates and signifies a bond between I and We. If the primary status of speech is to affirm existence it becomes a corollary that individual existences through speech also affirm a commonality of existence, if not an existence in common. Language creates the possibility of commun-ication, of commun-ion, of being in common. The notion of We-ness has abundantly been explored. In chapter four, the notion of We-ness was shown to be present in the tradition of the sayings. Is it present in the actual usage of a saying?

Paroemiologists rarely notice the phatic function of traditional sayings. We are indebted to the British anthropologist Malinowski for the term "phatic" (Yaguello, 1981, p. 26). Bühler and Jakobson have modified and popularized the term (Ducrot & Todorov, 1972, p. 427). It now refers to the language which establishes and maintains contact between people: "d'où le fait aussi que la parole est vécue comme constituant, *par son existence même*, un lien social ou affectif" (Ducrot & Todorov, p. 427). The importance of the phatic function of language is that it links the primary ontological status of language with its social corollary. Language is, by its existence, confirmation of individual existence and affirmation of social bonding, of We-ness. This is what will be meant by the term "communion" although paroemiologists rarely speak of communion or of the phatic nature of traditional sayings in usage. We-ness displays perhaps the most primordial relationship between text and context.

Traditional sayings bind people together. This trait of solidarity is expressed by Paulhan in his initial learning stages of the Malgasy language:

> Je n'ai jamais vu personne interrompre les proverbes, mais il semblait au contraire que chacun portât son attention à les favoriser, à les faciliter—*comme l'on est "de coeur" avec un acrobate* qui accomplit un tour dangereux; ou bien encore, comme aux refrains d'une opérette, *les adversaires de tout à l'heure se trouvent soudain d'accord.*
>
> De ces paroles obscures cependant je ne cherchais pas encore à saisir le sens, mais je *ressentais d'abord autour de moi l'attention, et presque la coopération qu'elles exigeaient.* (1966, p. 102, emphasis added)

Initially, Paulhan felt in the saying of the proverb that there was a cooperation, a solidarity, which even united enemies. Later on, he still believed in the "influence" of the proverb with regards to solidarity:

> Je puis avoir encore le sentiment qu'un accord plus intime et ferme s'établit, à la faveur du proverbe, entre mon interloculeur et moi, que cet interlocuteur me devient en quelque manière plus familier. (1966, p. 116)

From experience, Paulhan confirms that traditional sayings create links between participants. Furthermore, his conclusion is interesting in that after speaking of solidarity, of links, of communion, Paulhan returns the phatic to the ontological:

> Ils (les proverbes) sont encore des choses singulières, qu'il est urgent de *dire*, et de dire le plus exactement possible—en sorte qu'à propos de ces choses, ou de ces mots, toute une part du langage se trouve employée à établir que l'on peut parler. (1966, p. 124)

An example of communion fostered by traditional sayings is the role played by mottos (*devises*). Etymologically, motto refers to *mot*. It affirms again the relationship between speaking, existence, and solidarity. The French counterpart, *la devise*, is derived etymologically form the verb *devider*, which in the twelfth century meant to share, to order, and to relate, in the sense of relating a story (Picoche, 1979, p. 206). The motto "*A mari usque ad mare*" serves to rally Canadians from coast to coast. It is a saying that carries within it the pride of Canadians, their being together as a country. A contemporary example is Knipe's comment in reference to his returning to teach French in an immersion situation. Knipe writes in the April, 1984, *Newsletter* of the Canadian Parents for French Association:

> I trust that this achievement [communicative and linguistic competence in French] will ultimately lead to the personal conviction that *their* country does indeed extend *a mari usque ad mare.* (p. 7)

Similarly, the motto of Québec "Je me souviens" is deeply grounded in communal pride. It refers to the remembrance of a mother country, France, after the defeat of 1759. It became the rallying saying for the francophones of Québec during the *révolution tranquille* of the sixties, which aimed at reversing the hegemony that the British had established in the province. "Je me souviens" is even inscribed on the vehicle license plates of the province, and thus, everyone, everyday, remembers the defeat and the previous reign of the mother country.

A common riddle even links the motto to the dialect spoken in Québec, *le joual*. It goes like this:

> Q.—Pourquoi est-ce qu'on parle joual au Québec?
> R.—Parce que leur devise est "Jument souviens".

The pun comes between *joual*, the shortened version of *cheval*, and *jument*, the altered pronunciation of *je m'en*. However, the riddle, subconsciously, relates the motto to the dialect of the province making even a stronger case for national identity and solidarity. The unique language becomes inextricably woven into the motto. The motto displays powerfully the solidarity that sayings convey.

The sense of solidarity, of being together in common, is possible through traditional sayings because of two features. First, solidarity is fostered by a saying because its connotational meaning is well known to speaker and audience (Jason, 1971, p. 171). The risks of being misunderstood, or not understood, are diminished. "All is well that ends well" breathes on our familiarity with the English language. This is not to say that the saying is not polysemic. Instead, the utterance of the saying points out that, because situations appear to be similar among hearers and readers, similar interpretations will be made.

Secondly, solidarity becomes possible because tradition grounds similar perspectives on the world. The saying "This is Laloifi" (Schultz, 1965, p. 64) is incomprehensible to us. Its translation to "This is under the chestnut tree" is not any more comprehensible than before although the language is familiar. Yet, because of their traditions, Samoans will immediately understand that it means "This is a secret." It speaks of the elders exacting respect from the younger ones, the martial arts of club fighting, the instructing of young men by a master. Schultz gives a rendition of the tradition behind the saying in the following story:

> Laloifi is the name of a piece of land in Satupaitea. Valomua, the owner of the land, was one day instructing his young men in club fighting. One pupil had learned his lesson so well, that he struck down the master. When the terrified youngster was about to run away, the chief jumped up and said, *O Laloifi nei*, i.e., Here in Lalofi no one has witnessed it; it will remain a secret and nothing will happen to you. (p. 64)

The traditional elements presented in the story are foreign to us and thus, by exclusion, do not foster solidarity or commonness. To us, they are interestingly new. However, to the Samoans,

the saying "This is under the chestnut tree" brings a commonness of view into words. It establishes a connection between an actual, common situation, and a common body of traditional knowledge.

Solidarity or communion has been seen as a corollary of the primary ontological status of language. Traditional sayings demonstrated this communion through the experience of Jean Paulhan, through a specific genre, the motto or the *devise*, and by expressing the underlying commonness of tradition and connotations.

Communion versus communication

When text and context meet and when we observe or feel a communion between participants, it can be said that the text has fostered a noninstrumental occurrence. When the child, in the presence of her or his mother, says "Mommy," a communion is communicated, a union in common has taken place. Information is not present; emotion is. A traditional saying enters the scene, and humans start reconciling to each other and to the past. Gobard states that verbal relations are not reducible to communication but to communion (1976, p. 23). Communication can be restricted to half words, to brief statements, because of communion. Gobard indicates that the affective relationship between people through text is the sine qua non condition to human development and communication. This relationship is neither functional nor instrumental. There is no desire to act upon the We:

> "Ça va fraîchir, c'te nuit" dit l'un.
> C'est une façon de se flairer l'un l'autre, une façon de se rassurer entre voisins, de confirmer la paix, toujours précaire, et de renouveler une amitié fondée sur une solidarité cosmique: nous sommes bien tous les deux soumis aux mêmes intempéries, aux mêmes menaces, nous sommes donc ensemble sur ce coin de terre et nous nous en assurons rituellement, après quoi nous pourrons reprendre notre chemin sans craindre la solitude car nous savons que, même seul, le villageois n'est jamais isolé. (Gobard, 1976, p. 24)

What the communion relation between text and context offers is a situation where a We is established with no desire to use this We to ultimate ends. It just is.

The pedagogical status of communion

The terminology of education, present in "objectives," "strategies," "aims," "planning," "input-output," "retrieval," "skills," among others, attempts to name and direct experiences that separate the teacher from the student. As in war games, two camps are formed with equal or unequal status, power, and experiences. One acts upon the other.

The status of communion in traditional sayings speaks to a sine qua non condition for education. Education must heed the lessons of traditional sayings. The institution that the system of education has fostered must listen to the pedagogic voice emanating through We-ness. Traditional sayings have been seen as didactic (see chapter two)— mysteriously didactic because the lived feeling was neither identified nor studied in research. When the phatic relationship between the text and the context is examined, this mysterious power becomes less obscure. Traditional sayings, by allowing the emergence of the We, display a basic condition for learning from teaching: from communication. Solidarity itself is first and foremost when traditional sayings are placed in a situation. Similarly, in a pedagogical situation, solidarity is experienced first. It is the bonding together that sets the stage, as it were, that creates the atmosphere. Moreover, this very bonding is pedagogic in that it is protection and belonging: it is an acting together. In this way, pedagogy counters the war terminology imported to education.

At this point, one is reminded of *Le petit prince*'s definition of taming (apprivoiser). When requesting to be tamed, the fox indicates that "apprivoiser" means "créer des liens" (Saint-Exupéry, 1946, p. 68). The above notion of communion is akin to "apprivoiser" although the latter is the process and the former is the result. In fact, the scene between the fox and "le petit prince" is illuminating. The fox asks to be tamed and, as the fox says, people's footsteps cause retreat to the den. People hunt foxes. But, in contrast, "le petit prince's" footsteps will call the fox above ground:

> Mais, si tu m'apprivoises, ma vie sera comme ensoleillée. Je connaîtrai un bruit de pas qui sera différent de tous les autres. Les autres pas me font rentrer sous terre. Le tien m'appellera hors du terrier, comme une musique. (p. 69)

The fox points out metaphorically the difference between war games and communion. The belonging together of the word "apprivoiser" illustrates pedagogy. Paradoxically, in togetherness, uniqueness enters the scene: the fox becomes unique.

In conclusion, the attitude that communion requests is one of protection. Because the power status of teacher/student and parent/child are unequal, the situation demands that communion be within a spirit of protection, "To teach is to take good care [of one's children]" (Scheven, 1981, p. 383).

2. Description as concurrence between text and context

The traditional saying "It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest," according to Kunstmann (1981), can be traced to antiquity. Multiple illustrations of usage are found in European literature and proverb collections from the tenth century onward. Kunstmann notes its use in teaching and preaching (p. 199), it lends itself well to moralizing. It will be the task of this section to show the usage situation of this type of descriptive sayings. The first part will look at the naming of a situation by the insertion of a descriptive saying. The second part will interpret the meeting of the text and context as a relationship of concurrence. The third part will discuss the pedagogical notion of description.

Description has been coined as a function of language after a review of Reboul's (1980) and Gobard's (1976) classification of language functions. It was noted, following Gobard, that the vehicular function proclaims the world. It is a cognitive grasp on the world (p. 28). Reboul's presentation of the referential function of language (to let something be known), of its expressive function (to inform and to express), and of its metalinguistic function (to speak about speech) (pp. 46-50) all have one element in common: they all describe or proclaim. The basic relationship is that of a person or persons being put in contact with the world through words in a mode of concurrence. The key term is the word "and," as in "I *and* this," "We *and* this."

Description is recognized as a function of traditional sayings (Ollier, 1976, p. 337; Rogedem, 1972, p. 689). Through description, traditional sayings establish a concurrent relationship between a text *and* a context. The descriptive relationship places a named observation into a context. The relationship is possible because of the nature of the saying. For example, "It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest" does not command. It merely states the assertion that the bird is an ill bird. This kind of saying, by its very nature, sets the relationship of its usage. Thus, description should be understood as referring to the nature of the saying as well as to the usage to which it is subjected.

The naming of situations

Focussing on the descriptive nature of traditional sayings, we notice that they name situations. "It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest" expresses an aversion to a bird, the hoopoe, says Kunstmann (1981), which is "among the fowls of the air what the skunk is among the beasts of the field" (p. 201). The bird's "filthy" habits are noted as a matter of fact. A judgement, however, is passed with the words "It is an ill...." These four words also express, in an unquestioning manner, an opinion that filth is unsavory. The experience of filth is introduced within a scheme of values that favours cleanliness. The descriptive saying, then, names two situations. One is observed: the bird fouling its nest. The second is contextual: the value assigned to cleanliness, that is grounded on the previous observation. In the above saying it can be noted that descriptions name these two types of situations.

First, "It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest" gives, in words, the summation of a recurrent action: the fouling of a nest. Similarly, the saying "Birds of a feather flock together" (Wilson, 1970, p. 60) observes a recurring way of acting among birds, that of flying together. Descriptive sayings express observations of phenomena that have the quality of appearing periodically. Thus, observations on weather become sources of reliable predictions. They can be as easily noticed as the Japanese proverb "With the fall of one leaf we know that autumn has come to the world" (Buchanan, 1965, p. 6), or as specific as another Japanese proverb that says "The weather that clears up at night never holds long" (Buchanan, p. 7).

Descriptive sayings are close to experience. They name the observations made through time, be it a lifetime, a generation, or even longer. Descriptive sayings reflect experiences of frequent phenomena and become guides of knowledge for future generations. Parmar (1975) in speaking of India states:

> Sociologically, most of the sayings refer to speech communication and reflect social relationships and the experiences of the people. For instance, weather forecast formulae, conceived in folk-sayings, are of considerable importance to the bulk of peasant population the world over. Variety of signs, behavioural modes of animals and botanical changes, which are perceived by the people, particularly the agricultural communities who do not fall within the segments of technology-based meteorological information, often act as informing devices to them. (p. 115)

Along with the observation of repeated happenings, Parmar introduces the second dimension of description: its naming of social interests and problems.

Secondly, descriptive sayings name social and cultural orientations. "It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest" names a concern for cleanliness, particularly the cleaning of oneself. The saying names the responsibility that a culture assigns to individuals. Another saying concurs by condoning pride of self: "The bird loves her nest," or "A tous les oiseaux leurs nids sont beaux" (Wilson, 1970, p. 60). These descriptive sayings teach not only recurring, observed phenomena but, also, underlying values. This dimension has been called "moral" by paroemiologists Rogedem (1972) and Taylor (1962). Let it be noted here that we prefer to use the term "values" in the present context because "value" refers to the intrinsic worth of an act, object, or person, while "moral" relies on external guidelines of rightness and wrongness. This second layer of situational naming presents values and questions significant to an in-group: in this case, cleanliness and pride.

Another example can be provided by a Zulu observation of animals: "The dog will finish the water with its tongue" (Nyembezi, 1963, pp. 131-132). People observed that, while dogs lap water, it seemed to drop out of the mouth back into the vessel. Yet, after a short while, the water decreased. Unlike other animals, which take big mouthfuls at a time, the dog has to lap with the tongue. It is a slow process of drinking, but it is drinking all the same. The saying tells of the Zulu concern for patience and courage, which may not be a trait

restricted to the Zulu people but which is of special concern for their survival (Nyembezi, p. 41). Descriptive sayings, then, name observations and values significant to particular cultures. The noting of this characteristic of descriptive sayings has led *la parole* paroemiologists to attempt generalizations of cultural traits from sayings.

The exposition of the type of situations named by traditional sayings has focussed on the situations elaborated in the sayings themselves. In actual usage, the description is placed within a context. The issue of descriptive usage, or naming, will now be addressed. If the saying "It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest" is used today by a parent who does not agree with a child's messy habit of not cleaning one's bedroom, it is an act of naming a situation. First, the saying spurs a realization of a category of messiness. The act of saying names, as we have seen, the original behaviour of the foul bird. It also names the child's action (or nonaction). In the naming comes the categorizing of this experience with other experiences of messiness. Ollier (1976) says that a saying "commence là où l'expérience concrète fournit la base à l'institution de catégories, un principe de classement" (p. 333). He notes the grounding in experience that occurs on two levels: that of original descriptive observation of the saying and that of the present state of affairs. In a way, to name a situation is to initiate a taming of the unpredictable. The messiness is no longer unpredictable when the saying has been uttered. In fact, messiness has been placed within an order of things: that of the recurrent ill actions of the foul bird. Naming with descriptive sayings is ordering the world; it is an initiation to an ordered view of experience.

Furthermore, the usage of the descriptive sayings brings the affirmation that the present experience fits into an already ordered world. This notion grounds authority and truth because it names, by its very usage, a "true" or "predictable" or "recurrent" state of affairs. Paulhan (1966), in relating his experience of proverbs states:

> Dès l'instant que l'on parvient à isoler ce fait, toute difficulté est levée: lorsque je prononce le proverbe, ce n'est point une phrase que je place habilement, c'est toute une vérité dont j'affirme l'existence. (p. 123)

The naming through descriptive sayings affirms a "truth," as a constant or as a value that is

prized by a particular culture. "It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest," when used in a situation, states a recurring observation, the bird fouling its nest; it gains a truth value. By analogy, its application becomes true: the child is like a foul bird. The saying transfers experience from one situation to another and from one generation to another. Because the basic experience is seen as true, its application to the new situation holds as true as well.

An example of the truth value of descriptive sayings grounded in experience can be found in the way Emily Dickinson coins an aphorism based on observation: "We who saw the launching/ Never sailed the Bay" (in Barnes, 1979, p. 233). The saying expresses, literally, a true observation; one cannot be at once a spectator of and a participant in a voyage. She uses the saying to conclude a poem about the passage from life into death. "We who saw the launching/ Never sailed the Bay," because of its truth, also proffers truth into the used situation: the voyage from life into death and the impossibility of being at once alive and dead.

Emily Dickinson's use of a descriptive saying in a concluding statement presents a dimension of the act naming. After first naming as categorizing and, secondly, naming as truth-saying, comes the function of naming as an emblematic act. The etymology of the word "emblem" is significant. It meant, from the Greek *emblema*, an insertion, something thrown in (Coles, 1979, p. 245; Picoche, 1979, p. 49). A traditional saying is an emblem in that it is something "thrown" into a situation because it stands out of the context. However, usage situations are interesting in that they unveil the nature of naming as an emblem. Zumthor (1976), Langworthy (1974), Cerquiglini and Cerquiglini (1976), and Schulze-Busacker (1978) have noted that traditional sayings are often used as introductions or conclusions in discussions or in writings. Buridant (1976) found that out of 107 sayings in *Les Jeux-Partis*, 62 were found at the beginning or at the end of the texts. *Les Jeux-Partis* are oral games of *reparties* between two partners. Paulhan (1966) found a similar usage in the *hain-tenys* of the Malgasy people. *Hain-tenys* are also oral games between partners. The usage of sayings to introduce and to conclude speaks to the experience we have of them. Because they name situations and because they stand out as true and prefixed, traditional sayings encapsulate our own past

knowledge and perceptions into brief statements which rejoin the author-ity of tradition. When spoken as introductions or conclusions, traditional sayings take past experiences and focus them into a crucial encapsulation. Descriptive sayings condense experience. That makes them into emblems.

The usage of sayings to introduce and to conclude was deemed to be a rhetorical technique (Zumthor, 1976; Schulze-Busacker, 1978). The predication of traditional sayings as rhetorical instruments is inattentive to the way we live sayings, particularly as introductions and conclusions. "It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest" condenses the past, repeated experiences of others into a short description. It also condenses a system of values and an assessment of the here-and-now situation. The saying shines like a convex mirror into which are reflected many contexts. It stands illuminating the situation. An example could be the usage of "A white fowl does not know it is old" (Arewa & Dundes, 1964, p. 77). The Yoruba saying is used in a situation where an older child has been left to look after younger brothers or sisters. As Arewa and Dundes relate it, if the older child does not fulfil the responsibility and a younger child is hurt, the parents will reprimand with the saying "A white fowl does not know it is old." The descriptive saying condenses the knowledge and experiences of a culture: the white fowl used for sacrificial purposes only, the fact that it should know its higher status, the inability of younger children to be responsible, the necessity for older ones to realize their duties, the nature of parenthood that allows the making of a judgment. The saying fulfils with participants and to observers the emblematic function of sayings.

The roles of text and context

The situation of usage has been reviewed in terms of a discussion of the situations themselves and in terms of the act of naming in a situation. The question to be addressed now is that of how a text, a descriptive saying, influences the context. After portraying the situation, the direction given to this situation by the insertion of a saying will now be depicted in two stages: the prediction, and the concurrence.

Paulhan (1966) narrates the following usage of a descriptive saying:

> Si je me demande, ainsi quel est le sens du proverbe: *Oeuf d'alouette au bord de la route; ce n'est pas moi le coupable, c'est l'alouette.*
>
> Ralay.— "Mais où l'as-tu entendu? De quoi s'agissait-il?
>
> —Je ne m'en souviens pas. Dis-moi seulement ce que le proverbe veut dire.
>
> Ralay réfléchit, et me répond:
>
> —Voici, tu es marchand de rafia. Tu viens au marché; ton premier client, c'est un paysan qui ne connaît pas la valeur des choses. Le prix que tu lui demandes, quand ce serait dix piastres, il le donne. Et ton voisin te dit: "Ce n'est pas bien tu voles ce pauvre homme." Alors toi: "Tu plaisantes, c'est sa bêtise qui l'a volé. Œuf d'alouette au bord de la route; ce n'est pas moi le coupable, c'est l'alouette." (p. 107)

With this example of usage, Paulhan indicates the embeddedness of the saying. However, embeddedness gains a particular significance when the roles of text and context are considered. Embeddedness is the preparation that the context gives to a saying, be it an explicit preparation or not. In Paulhan's example, the situation pre-dictates the coming of the saying as an event. The stage is set and when it comes, the saying feels right (p. 108). The context, then, has already initiated a direction for the actions that follow. The influence of the text is preceded by the situation which influences the text. The text points to the pre-text. In the example of "The white fowl does not know it is old," the exigencies of the culture, the notion of the child, the delegating of responsibility, and even the derelection of responsibility set the stage: all together, they predict the text of the saying.

While the situation readies the saying and already sets a direction for human action, the introduction of a descriptive saying substantiates the prediction. The saying, because it is an emblem, gives substance to the readiness already initiated. But, this direction is not forced upon the situation; the text con-curs with the context. The word concurence is derived from the Greek *com*, together, and *currere*, to run. The text running along side the context could be a literal interpretation. There is in the saying "It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest" a sense of describing that places words along side of the situation rather than forcing them upon the context. In Kalter's (1980) words, "the listener is not directly assaulted with advice and criticism" (p. 61). There is a sense of direction that confirms the pre-text. In the confirmation does not come undue pressures to conform to the text. The text comes with, but

not upon, the context. "It is an ill bird..." is an acknowledgement and its usage says: "This is how I feel about the situation (your messiness). I see it that way, but do with it what you will and suffer the consequences. I am not commanding you to clean up your mess, only hoping that the the next time you will remember and act according to my wishes." Although a direction is pointed to, it is not forced upon the context. Then, text and context really con-cur in the descriptive mode of using traditional sayings.

The pedagogical interpretation of description: protection

It is important to note that concurrence and curriculum have in common the root *currere*, to run. Concurrence, as a pedagogic mode, tells of a running together. In traditional sayings, the pedagogic voice is that of running together with a situation, a context. A 1982 issue of *J'aime lire*, a magazine for children of ages six to eight, presented a game of decoding the saying "Plus on est de fous, plus on rit." It shows ladybugs, grouped together. The child has to decode the number of dots on their backs in order to identify each of the letters of the saying. The child engaged in the activity of decoding does not know that the saying coexists with the picture. Once the text is decoded and comes to prominence as a text, the child reads it but is not quite sure who is crazy; perhaps the ladybugs are, and they are laughing because they are together. And the child goes on to the next page. What has happened is that the text concurs with the context without demanding and exacting action. The text coexists: that is, exists with the context. Yet, the child of six to eight years of age is unable to grasp the nonliteral meaning of the saying. The role of the text is one of coexistence on a literal level. Later on, it will coexist nonliterally as well.

The above example makes explicit an attitude of protection on the part of the writers. The text was not prepared in order to command, but rather it was there as an offering. The child did whatever he or she wished with it, but it was there, a little like an apple within reach in case one gets hungry. There is a benevolent sense of being there as a text, of coexisting without imposing. For pedagogy, descriptive sayings tell of protection but also of openness of action. The impetus for action is upon the actor, but the impetus for guiding is upon

coexistence. Description spells out a relationship of coexistence.

3. Prescription: from protection to domination

While description fostered a concurrence of text and context, and communion restored the commonness in traditional sayings, prescription deals with a function of sayings that allows the text to precede and dictate experience and action. Description dealt with sayings like "Il n'est pire eau que l'eau qui dort." Prescription is a notion that announces the experience of its imperative form: "Méfiez-vous des eaux dormantes" (Rogedem, 1972, pp. 689-690). This section will examine first the meaning of norms; secondly, it will question intent and norm in usage. Thirdly, the transfer from traditional sayings to slogan will be made. Fourthly, a traditional saying and a slogan will be contrasted. Finally, pedagogical conclusions will be drawn from reflections on prescriptive usage.

The meaning of norm in traditional sayings

To prescribe is to write, *scribere*, before, *prae*, to give the rule before the experience. The etymology of the word is indicative of the lived sense that we have of the sayings:

> Aimez-vous les uns les autres. (Maloux, 1960, p.v)
> Do as I say, not as I do. (Wilson, 1970, p. 190)

Both sayings are using the imperative mode; they give commands. "Do as I say, not as I do" is the abstract formulation of observations. If we trace an imaginary scenario, it would be as follows.

A mother notices that often she admonishes her child to eat all his or her vegetables. The mother knows that it is important to have vegetables in one's diet. But, it happens that one night she doesn't eat all her own vegetables. When her child comments on this, she reflects and realizes that she does not always do what she tells other to do. In fact, she can think of many situations when she does not do as she admonishes. Tonight, she tells her child: "You know, I may not always do what I say, but I know it is good for you, so, please do it." This realization begins to disturb her. She notices that teachers tell students to write neatly; yet, she

receives a note from the teacher, and the note is not at all neat and clean. So, teachers, too, admonish but do not necessarily adhere to their admonitions. The process of observation goes on; at the same time, the words of excuse become more and more formalized. One day, the saying "Do as I say, not as I do" appears, in exasperation perhaps. So far, the saying has proceeded from experience and observation, to the formulation of a rule, which, in this case, has been repeated historically. We find the saying in many historical contexts: about the peasants "It is as folke dooe, and not as folke saie," or about preachers "Preachers say, Do as I say, not as I do," or to children "It has always been considered allowable to say...to children, do as I say, not as I do" (Wilson, 1970, p. 191).

In the formulation of the saying and in its foundation in experience, stands a value judgement. In effect, the saying is: "It is good to do as I say and not good to do as I do." It has acquired this status because of the observation that people do not do as they say. Also, it is grounded in a belief that the rational being, the one which states truths, has a better grasp of goodness than the body, the instincts, the unconscious does. This view reflects the cultural bias in which the saying emerges. It contrasts with the opposing view that "Example is the best teacher." The saying "Do as I say, not as I do" makes explicit, propagates, and crystallizes an ethical world. In the saying lies the shift from observation to value judgement. However, since the value judgement, the norm as it were, stems from its cultural source, it returns to observation.

Once into existence, the prescriptive saying reverses the experiential order. For a child, to be told "Do as I say, not as I do," places the rule of behaviour before the observation or the experience. The child may not have noticed that adults often use double standards. Then, the saying is a realization that a rule is imposed before it has been understood in experience. The observation of double standards in adults will come as a result of the saying. The observation will not generate the saying as in the previous paragraphs. Similarly, the saying "Aimez-vous les uns les autres" does not emanate for the child from an observation nor from an experiential understanding of the saying. Instead, it requests, admonishes, even commands to act

according to a rule: love each other. The saying precedes experience and channels action. The saying, however, also reflects the cultural values that ground it: the importance of community, the value of generous and kind actions. It presents the principle of love as applicable to all at all times.

Prescriptive sayings recall their etymology: to write before experience, *prae -scribere*. The power expressed by the word, that is, by writing, brings us back to the comparison made earlier (see chapter five) between oral and written speech. Prescriptive traditional sayings partake of written speech in the separation that they effect between experience and rule of behaviour. This separation calls forth the dialectic participation-contemplation as evidenced through the oral and the written modes. *Scribere* symbolizes the contemplative order, the rule before the experience. Similarly, the word "precept" indicates a genre of traditional sayings. "Aimez-vous les uns les autres" is classified as a precept by Maloux (1960). Precept is defined as "instruction or direction regarding a given course or action" (Funk & Wagnalls, 1966, p. 992). Its etymology also indicates that the rule precedes experience: from the Latin *capere,* to receive, and *prae*, before.

In order to define the experiential nature of the situation in which the rule precedes experience, we have to refer to what has been called a "norm" (Rogedem, 1972). The following are prescriptive sayings:

> Don't wake a sleeping dog (Kelly, 1879/1977, p. 60)
> If you are given a finger, do not swallow it all (Scheven, 1981, p. 265)
> Demande à la foudre ce qui se passe au firmament (Rogedem, p. 700)

These sayings express value judgements in terms of directions for action. The sayings do not merely point to, nor indicate, the road to be followed; they command that the path indicated be followed. The imperative mode frames action into a direction. The Latin word *norma* speaks of a standard, a model, a pattern, much like a carpenter's square (Picoche, 1979, pp. 161-162). The carpenter's square allows no deviation. The line is straight and direct to the goal just like the prescriptive saying: "do not swallow," "demande," and "don't wake." *Norma* also relates to the normal state of affairs, the most ordinarily accepted way of behaving. Prescriptive

sayings, by commanding, attempt to influence human behaviour towards a normal and accepted mode.

In experiential terms through sayings, a norm tells of a mode of seeking to dominate behaviour. The imperative verbs do not guide; they force into a behaviour or inhibit it. "Don't wake a sleeping dog" seeks to restrict action. It forbids one to wake up the sleeping dog. Similarly, "Do as I say, not as I do" is a way of forcing one's children to eat all their vegetables. The saying mobilizes language into domination over a situation. In this context, the paroemiological perspective that sayings are "strategies" (Seitel, 1969), is correct. The strategy, like the prescriptive saying, offers a military significance to rule the actions of others. A norm is presented in such a way that conformity is required.

In a prescriptive saying, the text-context relationship is disjointed. Concurrence, as co-occurence has disappeared. The text now precedes the experiential context, although text and experience are still in a dialectical relationship. "Don't wake a sleeping dog" would have no meaning as a rule if experience had not been peripheral. For example, it will make sense to a child, at a first level of meaning, if the child knows that some dogs bite. If some dogs are dangerous, then it makes sense not to disturb their sleep for they might be angry, or simply , they might be in their usual guarding mood. However, what makes "Don't wake a sleeping dog" a prescriptive saying is that it demands that in every situation the rule precede and command experience.

Prescriptive usage exhibits an experiential state where the situational context loses its power before the text. The Swahili saying "If you are given a finger, do not swallow it all" tells a Swahili person that in all situations exaggeration and greed are wrong. Although very few prescriptive sayings are found in *Swahili Proverbs* (Scheven, 1981), this one exemplifies in concrete terms that moderation is best and that one should be content with a gift. The saying, as a rule, precedes the situation. Its insertion into the context attempts to strongly influence the situation into a given direction: moderation. Through the imperative, the saying overpowers the intricacies and potential exceptions of a given situation. In effect, in the face

of this saying, all situations that require moderation are alike. The details of particular context have been lost before the text. The text is inattentive to the context.

The intent and the norm: leading ideology

This section will link prescriptive sayings to prescriptive usage of sayings. Thus far, imperative traditional sayings of the type "Draw not your bow till your arrow is fixed" (Kelly, 1879/1977, p. 77) have been considered. There stands, however, in the text-context relationship that has been presented a mode of experiencing that should not be restricted to the form of prescriptive sayings per se. Text leading context represents a mode of experiencing language that is explicit in usage.

Prescriptive usage displays an attempt to influence behaviour. However, pedagogy enters or leaves the scene of usage depending on the degree of constraint generated. When "Draw not you bow till your arrow is fixed" literally forces a child to take his or her time and when the responsible adult stands over the child exacting that the saying be carried out, then pedagogy is absent. Ideology refuses critique and the child cannot say: "But, my finger cannot hold my arrow any longer. Let's see how you hold it." The course of action is deflected into other efforts than "Draw not your bow...." With intent and norm, the notions of ideology and authority re-enter discussions.

The question of who uses sayings is difficult to answer in general, but often the Elders, the teachers, and the parents use them. Kalter (1980) notes that, for the Yoruba people, the link between maturity and proverb usage is so strong that children and young people may not use proverbs in their conversations with adults. Exceptions are permitted only when a formulaic, apologetic disclaimer of disrespect prefaces the proverb to indicate the speaker's awareness of the temerity of invoking ancestral wisdom before Elders (p. 57).

Prescriptive usage of sayings may allow for experiencing what has been called ideology (see chapter four). By demanding adherence to a norm or a code of action and values, prescriptive usage leads to ideology or to the phenomenon seen by Ricoeur as "a form of violence exercised against our thinking, which prevents us from advancing to maturity of

judgement" (1973, p. 155). This violence, done to us by ideology, must however, be complemented by consent and critique. Chapter four showed that, as a reaction against ideology or authority, critique could pose an alternative. The distinction being made here is that prescriptive usage, intent and norm leading ideology, are not per se the evil. The danger comes when power of intent and norm eradicate critique.

For example, "Draw not your bow till your arrow is fixed" is a common sense judgement in archery. Figuratively, the saying commands patience. When the saying is paired with a commanding attitude from the user, the receiver may not be allowed to retort: "But, there are times when patience is wrong; catching fleas would have been an earlier example where haste is important, or playing video-games today. What do you make of the saying 'As the fool thinks, the bell tinks' which speaks of moderation as weak will?" In fact, Alfred de Musset answered a proverb speaking of patience in this way:

> Il y a un proverbe qui prétend que ce qui est différé n'est pas perdu.(...)Qu'on tienne ce langage en paradis,...C'est à merveille; il sied à des gens qui ont devant eux l'éternité de jeter le temps par les fenêtres. Mais nous, pauvres mortels, notre chance n'est pas si longue. (In Oster, 1978, p. 976)

The retort, or the possibility of retort, is of great importance. When this possibility disappears, so does pedagogy. Examples from slogans will now serve to enlighten this particular aspect of pedagogy: dia-logue, a speaking between text and context, between participants. What has been shown as a prescriptive form of saying exhibits a paragon of usage. It must be noted that, while prescriptive sayings display per se the disjointed text-context relationship, their usage may not be restricted to this relationship. But, as it will be shown, slogans are the best examples of the disjointed text-context relationship in usage.

From the saying to the slogan

On January 26, 1982, the Ministry of Tourism and Small Business of Alberta unveiled its publicity slogan "Wish you were here." We are accustomed to the phrase often repeated in love songs, letters, and advertisements for long distance telephone calls. "Wish you were here" conjures a nostalgic yearning for a presence. An emptiness, an incompleteness is felt. The

words re-animate a lived sensation of separation from the people who dearly inhabit our lives. The soft whispering of the alliteration murmurs of past moments in the company of a loved one and at the same time calls for the realization that absence is at hand. Anchored on personal past experiences, the phrase, as an objectification, brings a nonpersonal perspective on presence and absence. It suggests that wishing a presence is commendable, a state to be valued. It intimates that absence leads to a need to eradicate itself through wishing: "Oh, but if you were here." It brings into a particular view of the world, one that values human relations, dialogues, communication, inter-view of minds. "Wish you were here" bestows a kind resonance between people, one of acceptance and importance of others. The saying insinuates a dialogue expressing a deeply felt sentiment from I to You. It brings forth the link between I, as a person with unique experiences, and the They who formulated the saying. Through the words, I relive in the perspective of the They, the value-laden notions of presence and absence in, and within, the uniqueness of a being.

As a traditional saying, "Wish you were here" solicits a response, demands an unconcealment of feelings, occasions a presence. Language and tradition speak through us and to us, pointing not to themselves but to the challenge of unconcealment. As a slogan for the tourist industry, "Wish you were here" leads unconcealment to pass into conformity. Within the context of tourism, "Wish you were here" solicits a series of complex innuendoes. The slogan still conjures a "nostalgic yearning for a presence." You, as a receiver or target, are solicited elsewhere, but your presence-value is gauged by the heftiness of a pocket-book. There is no mistake; it is publicity: for tourism. The usage context points to a decisive goal, and action is not guided but commanded in the direction of travel. The You implicitly talked to is a nonspecific, undifferentiated you. You are like everyone else: just a being, a receiver of the slogan. You could all be the same for all it matters and, in fact, it would be better if you were all the same; the best way to convince you could then perhaps be found. Thus, "Wish you were here" is not you; it is only other, any other.

Who is speaking? "(I) wish you were here." The I, as a speaker, suggests a person, but the *quid proquo* continues: it is a tourist bureau, a government that has no life beyond the one we lend it. You should hear the calling of the I, a calling into warmth and love, but I has only greed to offer. We are dismayed.

The publicity slogan, while recalling past moments and attracting into a mode of thought, closes unconcealment of feelings and responses. The words, like magicians, begin the journey of encounters with you, but the agent, the tourist bureau, and the goal undertake to stream the encounter into one possible road to action. The effort is to dominate; it counters and contradicts critique, reflection, unconcealment, and pedagogy.

Saying and slogan side by side

In order to understand further the lived sense of pedagogy hinging on prescriptive usage at a point when shifting away from pedagogy appears so easy, two examples will be contrasted to each other. Both examples are contemporary. One reflects a modern usage of a saying: "Riez et le monde rira avec vous"; the other exhibits the modern tendency to sloganize.

In the first example, the traditional saying "Riez et le monde rira avec vous" is found in a children's book of fables: *Fables et fabulettes* (n. d.). Colourfully illustrated, the collection of fables usually gives a full page illustration, a text or story, and a saying. The saying "Riez et le monde rira avec vous" (p. 12) is presented below the following text:

> Le chasseur chauve
> Un homme qui n'avait pas de cheveux s'acheta une perruque. Un jour, il était parti à la chasse avec ses amis quand une forte bourrasque de vent emporta son chapeau ainsi que sa perruque. Ses amis tentèrent de ne pas rire de sa mésaventure, mais l'homme au crâne chauve ne put s'empêcher de s'esclaffer lui-même; et il fit rire ses amis jusqu'à ce que les larmes leur coulent sur les joues, quand il leur dit: "Si les cheveux dont cette perruque est faite n'ont pas tenu sur la tête sur laquelle ils avaient poussé, comment voudriez-vous qu'ils tiennent sur la mienne?"
> Riez et le monde rira avec vous. (p. 12)

The story illustrating the saying is spoken by the anonymous voice of tradition. Behind the display of the story and of the saying comes an attitude of offering norms for the reader's edification. Although the saying commands, "riez," the lived sense is not that we have to laugh immediately. It is a recommended action. Later, children may remember the saying, at the

opportune moment, and may laugh at their misgivings. However, the command does not pressure, and it is deemed to be for the best of the children.

The second example was taken from the children's bi-monthly magazine *Astrapi* (1983) for 10 to 12 year olds. It presents an advertising slogan, "La poursuite: un jeu qui à l'école devient une calculatrice" (p. 15). Mieder and Mieder (1977-1978) have noted the proliferation of traditional sayings in advertising. They have also indicated the creation of many new sayings in the form of slogans. It is the slogan that will be exhibited here because it exposes modern prescriptive usage of sayings. The headline being the most important factor in attention getting (Mieder & Mieder, p. 309), we read "La Poursuite: un nouveau défi Lansay." This advertisement, addressed to children, is accompanied by a picture of a young boy pulling wrists with a semirobot creature. The child has a decided grin, and the creature is showing enormous teeth. The coveted game-calculator stands in the upper right corner. The text reads as follows:

> Avec La Poursuite, Lansay te lance un nouveau défi. Tu es sur l'autoroute et tu dois doubler le maximum de voitures. Prêt? Enclenche le turbo et fonce.
> Mais attention!
> La police est à tes trousses...
> La Poursuite: un jeu qui, à l'école devient une calculatrice.
> Lansay
> Casio (p. 15)

The slogan "La Poursuite: un jeu qui, à l'école devient une calculatrice" attempts to show the "goodness" of the video-game proposed. It is demonstrated that, as a game or an educational piece of hardware, "La Poursuite" is valuable for the child. The slogan tells the child that "La Poursuite" is a good amusement, and the speaker, the Lansay/Casio Company, relinquishes anonymity.

In the above examples, three different dimensions related to pedagogy can be uprooted: communicating-selling, ambiguity-clarity, separation-commonness. It must be noticed at this point that both examples continue the tradition of illustrating sayings that began in the Middle Ages. The saying "A picture is worth a thousand words" continues to be found in contemporary life when words are complemented by a pictorial context. The stories or written

texts further embed the sayings into a context and make it more precisely known.

First, the general intent of language usage has to be separated into two types of relationships between the user, the text, the context, and the receiver. "Riez et le monde rira avec vous" attempts, through words, to communicate some meaning; the need to not take oneself too seriously. The saying communicates a relationship of equality between humans and events in the sense that humans do not always control situations. Since they do not have control, humans should then recognize that it is normal to be defeated, to be the object of unpleasant and unforeseen circumstances. In this case, one should adopt a detached attitude and laugh at oneself. The story of the hunter serves to illustrate, in a concrete situation, how one would behave if one followed the saying "Riez et le monde rira avec vous." Through the anonymity of the user, the text is presented with a story in order to communicate a norm for action, and this norm is deemed beneficial. In the saying stands an authentic attitude with a humanistic goal. The reader is invited to respond and enter into a dialogue with the text. The reader-receiver is entitled to say, "I think it would have made sense to laugh, instead of cry, when the wind stole my umbrella or when I slipped into the mud puddle." Or a child may respond, "Why would one want to wear a wig anyway?" There is, in the dialogue, a sharing of human warmth and of meaning. The text of the saying and its usage does not prohibit this dialogue. This is communication. The "good" is negotiated between the text and the context.

The advertising slogan "La Poursuite: un jeu qui, à l'école, devient une calculatrice" attempts to sell a game-calculator. The text of the slogan and the context (pictures and words) aim at selling the machine. It tells a child, "Buying La Poursuite is good for you." The difference with the previous example is that the word "buy" underlies the text. Being "good for" is not gratuitous anymore, neither literally nor figuratively speaking. It is a question of money; that's where the "good" lies. The meaning of the text and context are devoid of richness. On the contrary, the meaning is subsumed to the intent of selling. Words have gained a "public-relations value" as May (1972) puts it. There is no authentic, humanistic goal to the saying, but there is a monetary one. Furthermore, the text and the context do not

communicate, they sell and, although the context is a personalized you, there is a denial of any human relationship. Logic predominates, not affection. Reboul (1980) and Elshtain (1982) have spoken of ideology as the domain of logical legitimation (see chapter four). We find in the advertisement a logic that serves to persuade and replace human relationships. In "La Poursuite: un jeu qui, à l'école, devient une calculatrice," the medium is the message; as long as it works, there is no message.

In the advertising slogan, the author possesses the text, thus denying for the readers-receivers the authority of their judgement. This denial makes the selling of a product possible. The Lansay/Casio Company tells the goodness of the product. The context does not illustrate in the sense of displaying. Rather, it uses imperative verbs, "enclenche et fonce," and exhorting interjections, "prêt, attention." The receivers do not have the time, nor the inclination, it is hoped, to think beyond the restrictive context into which they are placed. That context is one of fun, of speed, of challenge, of overpowering, and of eventual victory over the game and the world.

The communicating-selling dichotomy has repercussions for pedagogy. Pedagogy represents a mode of educating that prepares young, and sometimes not so young, people to shape and meet their future destiny. In the prescriptive mode of communicating unfolds a human relationship that favours sharing. The user and the receiver of the saying enter into a dialogue through the text and the context. This dialogue allows development and learning. However, when prescriptive usage becomes selling, as in the advertising slogan, indoctrination results in a relationship where the user subjugates all, text, context, and receiver to his/her goal. The only hope remaining is that the receiver will be so strong that, despite subjugation, critique will emerge.

Secondly, although the originator of the slogan is clearly known, ambiguity hides the real intentions of the user. Although the aim of selling goods becomes evident upon reflection and by deduction, for this *is* an advertisement, the text does not state it clearly. Ollier (1976), in speaking of some prescriptive usage states:

> Il (le proverbe) figure déjà lui-même une manière de dialogue - mais dans lequel le locuteur a l'avantage du choix de l'objection et de la réponse. Le moyen de faire pression se fait ainsi plus subtil: l'interlocuteur se trouve placé dans une alternative habile à masquer la situation réelle des protagonistes. (p. 341)

The sanctioned usage of traditional sayings by Elders, teachers, and parents already gives the "protagonists," as Ollier says, or the users, a strategic advantage. The question becomes: to what extent will this advantage be exploited? In the advertising slogan, an attempt is made to terminate the possibility of dialogue because dialogue means judgements from both parties, the user and the receiver. Often, behind an appearance of dialogue and goodness, the slogan masks the real intent of the user: selling.

The usage of "Riez et le monde rira avec vous" does not display an ambiguity of goals: it is presented for the edification of the receiver. However, the paradox is that the originator stands anonymously behind tradition and language. Authorship is only apparently anonymous: no one signed the text, but tradition moulded it. Language and tradition speak; the original author stands by unknown.

Thirdly, prescriptive usage may unite or separate user and receiver. In the example "Riez et le monde rira avec vous," the anonymous past proffers an imperative text illustrated by the story of a context. The reader is invited to dialogue; consent is not felt as exacting. The saying initiates a reconciliation into the We dialogue. However, the slogan exploits the commonness of an apparent dialogue. The Lansay/Casio Company speaks to the receiver, the child: "Tu es sur l'autoroute et tu dois doubler...La police est à tes trousses." But, the picture indicates the true nature of the "dialogue." It is a game of power where the child appears as a possible winner, but the true winner is the Lansay/Casio Company. Clenched teeth, intent stares, gripped hands all expose the relationship of separation where I (the user) overpower You. The separation is complete. The slogan returns to its etymological gaelic root of *sluagh gairm*, the war cry of an old Scottish clan (Reboul, 1975).

Through a contrastive study of a prescriptive traditional saying and a slogan, it has been shown that usage responds to various degrees of intent. By presenting the difference

between communicating and selling, a first level of relationship was examined. Furthermore, while selling closes off all dialogue, communication allows for critique and response. Selling also dwells in an ambiguity of intent that serves the purpose of the user and exploits commonness. These distinctions become crucial to the question of pedagogy. When can a pedagogic relationship be found?

Pedagogical conclusions

When this dissertation was in the process of being formulated, a colleague made the following remarks:

> A saying out of tradition is, in some senses to be performed like the playing of a sonata. There is an artful manner of expression, a technique, the right time, the right person, the right purpose, all of which make that saying the right thing to say. Is this not analogous to the teacher engaged in a learning dialogue? Must she/he not possess a sense of the appropriate? Must she/he not invoke that which will call the child out even as the artful rendition of a passage in Mozart or Rachmaninoff calls forth something utterly human and primordial in us? This artful saying or not saying, of knowing when to wait and when to speak we call the sense of the pedagogic in teachers. Is this not an authentic parallel between teaching and learning and traditional sayings? (Michael Bopp, March 1982)

Michael's words express a sensitivity to the importance of attentiveness to a situational context. Pedagogy lies in this sense of attentiveness, of awaiting the reactions and reflections of others. Prescriptive usage of traditional sayings indicate when this attentiveness is lost to the goal of the user.

The relationships presented in prescriptive usage dealt with two levels. On the one hand, from prescriptive sayings emanated a rule or a norm that was given before the experience and the observation. On the other hand, when this relationship of text and context are superimposed on a usage situation, prescriptive sayings may restore the text-context dialogue as in the example "Riez et le monde rira avec vous." But, in the usage of the slogan the disjointed text-context relationship remains. The slogan serves as an occasion to pursue the separation text-context. The text precedes and dictates to the context what the course of action should be. The text does not invite reactions, comments, reflections, experiences as responses to prediction. The prediction of the text is expected to be carried out as in authoritative

relationships (see chapter four). The text remains an objectification that is never reclaimed as one's own.

Pedagogy is often experienced in a relationship of teaching and learning. Pedagogical experiences are for "the good" of all parties involved. Growing, maturing, learning occur. Pedagogy counters indoctrination. Prescriptive traditional sayings bring to a crux the question of when pedagogy retires and indoctrination enters the scene. The presentation of contextual usage of a traditional saying and a slogan expressed the divergence that becomes explicit: from protection to domination.

Indoctrination is present when, as in the slogan, the text and its usage attempt to dominate the receiver. The path to be followed is not only offered, but it is subtly (or not so subtly) imposed, as in advertising. In this usage, no attention is paid to the situational context of the receiver. The game-calculator is not sold because it is good for the child. Instead, it profits the originator of the slogan. The good becomes relative to the user. The advertisement separates itself from the uniqueness of the child's situation. The child may be blind, but the advertisement still stands as good because it does not matter whether a blind child is a victim of consumerism. It does not matter either if a child develops an exclusive machine-child relationship. Nothing matters except profits, the originator's (or user's) profits. Indoctrination is a complete inattentiveness to the receiver and the receiver's context.

Pedagogy, however, is expressed by the dialogue of text and context, of user and receiver. Authority is wisdom when its offerings do not close off the dialogue. Authority becomes violence, as in ideology, when opportunities for critique are withdrawn. Objectification also follows the same pattern. When the objectified language is not allowed to speak to a situational context, objectifications must be countered by the context. Thus, a saying like "Il ne faut pas vendre la mèche avant de l'avoir allumée" speaks of an ancient context. This objectification also has to speak within the context of the child who uses it to prove that his little sister has too much confidence in what she learnt. The metaphorical saying penetrates the situation and speaks within it. The context gives it meaning. The pedagogic

voice of traditional sayings is heard when they speak from within the context. They are coloured by, and expressive of, the situation. Their polysemic voice, like a chameleon, blends in the context.

When Reboul (1975) states "Le proverbe n'est pas polémique, il pousse moins à l'action. Le proverbe ne prétend pas être vrai mais qualifie une situation" (p. 23), he is indicating profoundly the pedagogic power of traditional sayings. Sayings allow the qualifying of a situation. The slogan, however, does not attempt to qualify a situation. It remains aloof, and although it seems to be within the context, it aims at overpowering it in order to fulfil the goals of the user: consumerism.

4. Exploration: the transformation of text into poetry.

> The ravenousness of fondness is best disclosed by children....Is there not a sweet wolf within us that demands its food? (Dickinson, 1958, p. 824)

In a letter to Maria Whitney, in May, 1883, Emily Dickinson transforms the proverb "A growing youth has a wolf in his belly" (Barnes, 1979, p. 219). She transposed the accepted meaning of youth's appetite into an allusion to a need that everyone feels for tenderness and affection. The use to which Dickinson subjects traditional knowledge exemplifies a fourth type of relationship between text and context. This section will attempt to bring forth a dimension of usage closely tied to literary and poetic endeavours. They display the naming of new possibilties, of new worlds to be inhabited.

The founding notion of poetry

The word "poetry" has many meanings and connotations. The notion, like traditional sayings, reflects a kind of kinship between language and experience. In order to guide this section, Jean Starobinski's (1977) view of poetry in "Poetic language and scientific language" will be retained. In his exposition of the gradual split of a total, all encompassing language that stood for feelings, laws, music, reason, and things, he notes that poetry and science emerged with particular languages. Each presents a particular attitude in the world. To

poetry, he assigns the role of reminding us of an earlier united language that combines the fullness of knowing with the musical fullness of expressive power. Poetry, he says, confers on feelings and sensations an ever-increasing function of "the revelation of reality" (p. 141). Because feelings and sensations are the expressions of uniqueness, "the very seat of the manifestation of individual existence," they are manifestations of the universality of earthly existence. Feelings and sensations, in knowing, allow the reminder of an earthly unity before "science defined its methods and its territory" (p. 145). The poetic attitude, first, recognizes feelings and sensations as an integral part of knowledge and existence. Secondly, poetry is a reminder of a unity of expression which we yearn for, says Starobinski. Thirdly, the poetic expression is an exploration of the totality of the world (and humans) through the expression of alternatives suggested by a language that capitalizes on meaning much more than it says. Finally, individual existence and expression, thereby feelings and sensations, are legitimate ways of announcing universality that is, also, unity. This section will focus primarily on the third aspect of poetry, as given by Starobinski.

To unfold the experience of poetry Starobinski quotes Joachim Ritter (1971):

> What happens aesthetically is not based on a closed and withdrawn subjectivity. Its basis is the need to make apparent, to make present, something which would not otherwise be said or looked at. (p. 137)

Starobinski goes on to say:

> Poetry reminds us of the fragmentariness of our existence, of our limitations. On the other hand, because it opens to our minds a meaning larger than the words it uses, it arouses a call to liberty which gives no rest to whoever has been able to perceive it. (p. 145)

From the above two quotations emanate key issues for traditional saying usage. Poetry returns subjectivity to exploration in the sense that, although individual creation is valued, prime importance is found in the suggestiveness of expression and thereby in the new possibilities that are unveiled. From the opening to other possibilities rises a call to liberty, to freedom. The text, by spelling out alternatives, encourages a consciousness raising that things need not be the way they are, that other alternatives may be known and preferred. It is a little like Bruegel's "Hay chasing the horse" which, through negation, affirmed the alternative that a man could

behave like the hay and be chased by the woman (a horse). The poetic attitude emerges in the openness of attitudes to the idea that alternatives are possible. The usage of traditional sayings derived from a poetic attitude will now be studied.

Examples of exploration through traditional sayings

Many paroemiologists such as O'Kane (1950), Hassell (1962), Arner (1973), list the traditional sayings used in the writings of poets and novelists. These lists do little more than to make the point that writers do use traditional sayings to the benefit of their style of writing. Other paroemiologists such as Woods (1968), Stambaugh (1970), Barnes (1979), speak of the "perversion" of traditional sayings. "Perversion" is a term that represents the particular attitude adopted by researchers, not writers, and indicates that paroemiologists are a conservative group of people. Because of its negative connotations, the word proposes that the manipulating and changing of traditional sayings is an offense to tradition. Modifications of the following type are considered perversion, in this case through parody:

> For example, in the *Brothers Karamasov*, Dostoyevski also uses the proverb "One swallow does not make a summer" as a model (this proverb is an international one, going back to Aesop): "If I call him a scoundrel, it doesn't mean that I called all Poland so. One *lajdak* doesn't make a Poland." (Woods, 1968, p. 101)

Other modes of "perversion" are the results of expansion, inappropriate context (Woods, 1968), the insertion of a negation, paraphrase, or experimentation with new forms of sayings (Barnes, 1979). That writers be seen as "perverting" a saying is of little importance apart from the fact that the status quo is favoured by paroemiologists. However, the phenomenon of "perversion" noted by paroemiologists tells of a playfulness with words that writers possess and that we shall see in contrast as positive and pedagogic. For writers, traditional sayings are stepping stones to the expression of alternative worlds.

The most interesting and perhaps powerful example of exploration through traditional sayings is found in a 1920 monthly magazine published by the Dadaist group in Paris. From February to June, Paul Eluard, Jean Paulhan, Philippe Soupeault, Tristan Tzara, André Breton, Louis Aragon, and Francis Picabia published a four-page language manifesto entitled

Proverbe. Through *Proverbe*, the Dadaists demonstrated their revolt against, and parody of, language and logic (Baudoin, 1970). The example of *Proverbe* is powerful because, in the depth of their revolt, the Dadaists found in proverbs a form that could allow for transformation. Here is a group that shouts "Bas les mots" (April, 1920), finding through formalized language the possibility of liberation from the prison-like tradition of the words.

Proverbe plays with sayings in two ways. First, sayings are transformed: "Comme une poulie dans un pâté" is a play on "Comme un coq en pâte"; "Il faut rendre à la paille ce qui appartient à la poutre" is a variation of "Il faut rendre à Pierre ce qui appartient à Pierre"; and "Vivre d'erreurs et de parfums" recalls the saying "Vivre d'amour et d'eau fraîche." The words are altered on a basic framework just as Paulhan (1966) admitted in "L'expérience du proverbe." What was considered to be dead language has been revived with a new life and new meanings. Baudoin (1970) concludes:

> Tout se passe comme si Eluard et Péret soupçonnaient quelque obscure loi de l'esprit qui le fait fonctionner par formules, recréant à partir des schèmes vides et à demi conscients. Et ces schèmes conducteurs sont tout prêts à recevoir des charges contradictoires ou absurdes, sous l'étincelle d'imagination que l'association des mots, idées ou images fera jaillir. (p. 298)

Why then, can the form of traditional sayings not be channelled to provide new insights? "Vivre d'erreurs et de parfums" brings to the saying "Vivre d'amour et d'eau fraîche" a sceptical note on love. The experiences of love become a series of (trials and) errors and what remains is the superficial, fleeting scent of perfume. Love is a series of absences, an erring way of life. These suggestions of meaning are possible even if the Dadaists protested traditional methods of writing, made fun and mocked established rules, thereby showing the absurdity of language and tradition.

The revival of a traditional saying by amending the words on a fixed structure shows a play on the text and the pre-text. Such sayings are like a climbing backwards on the ladder of tradition. The text is a pretext for a play on the pre-text. The original saying, being the pre-text, is played with, modified, in order to create a new text. Despite their rejection of the contemporary notion of poetry, the Dadaists used traditional sayings as pre-texts in two senses.

They transformed the sayings and suggested their insertion into a world scheme, an alternative to the current mode of thought.

Secondly, completely new sayings are coined on tradition-like phraseology. We find:

> Le passé et La pensée n'existent pas.
> Le monde est grand, les uns sont gros et les autres sont maigres.
> Distraction pourrait bien signifier destruction.
> Après nous la blennohragie.
> Et il n'y aura jamais de faux Dada.

These examples sound like traditional sayings. Dadaists have accepted that the form of the language reflects the subconscious schema of thought (Baudoin, 1970, pp. 293-294). And so, the form of language allows for creativity. Baudoin expresses it in this way:

> Dans ces jeux qui font surgir des stéréotypes proverbiaux l'aspect créatif du langage, se saisit, en clair-obscur, le passage d'une attitude négative de rupture avec le langage à une attitude positive de réaffectation du langage: solution du dilemme entre le langage comme prison et la langage pourvoir d'incantation magique. (p. 301)

The passage from the cliché or language that has lost its meaning to a new possibility transforms the de-structive efforts of the Dadaists into a positive source of creativity.

Relationship of text-context

With exploration as a type of usage, the text takes a guiding role. First, the text of the saying participates in the making of a world. The world does not pre-exist, nor does the text designate this world. Instead, a text like "Comme un coq en pâte" expresses a common association where the chicken becomes food for the stomach. In descriptive usage, the saying would lead to reflections like: why should we eat such a beautiful animal? Its figurative meaning of being snug and comfortable (Quittard, 1842/1968, p. 254) could lead to reflections like: why is comfort of such importance to humans? Why is it so highly valued? Prescriptively, the expression could be used to sell electric blankets or to tell a child to dress warmly before going outside. Poetically, the saying incited a reflection of the opposite meaning: "Comme une poulie dans un pâté." The text points out a departure for a new, unusual, unwonted, and perhaps a-rational world. Since when does a pully belong snuggly in a pie? It does not, of course, in our current way of living the world. And it is because it does

not that the new text is meaningful. It offers the possibility of an a-rational context that counters current emphasis on rationality. Feelings and sensations begin to play a role. Through denial of the rationalness of the traditional saying, the new saying expresses that some things may appear comfortable while they are not really. Incongruity has to be recognized, like a pully in a pie. The text of the traditional saying participated in the creation of a new saying recognizing incongruity. Poetic usage transforms enunciation into re-enunciation (Meschonnic, 1976, p. 427).

By the same token, as the text leads to a new text, traditional sayings when re-enunciated lead the context to new insights, new possibilities. For example, when the saying "Pierre qui roule n'amasse pas mousse" becomes "Proverbe de vacances: Paul qui roule, le lecteur aussi," we are mystified. Need we make sense of the latter? Perhaps not, but associations can be made: Pierre becomes Paul, holidays are tied to rolling, perhaps moving or travelling. The reader is important for any writer or poet. Do readers take holidays? The new saying pulls us into an alternative that has not been demystified yet. Incomprehension of the world it reveals pulls us into an attempt to understand. The call, here, is stronger than the answer. It is in the call that new alternatives for the context are explored.

The pedagogic liberation

The notion of pedagogic liberation has two aspects: the call and the liberation. The call to new possibilities lies profoundly at the heart of pedagogy. Traditional sayings, because they can serve poetic usage, partake in the calling. When the status quo is enunciated, when a known world is proffered, it can be called in education under various terms: review, checking, testing. But, when a saying is transformed or a new one is coined, it calls for interpretation. In the call lies an extension of the world of the receiver; a search endeavours to find appropriate contexts. This call displays the pedagogic voice of traditional sayings. It is an invitation, first of all, to see traditional language as expressing much more than the words say. The polysemic nature of traditional sayings has been seen as an inherent element of their form (see chapter five). In pedagogy, the importance of this perspective lies in that it incites to a

search, a quest, a journeying to alternative interpretations.

Secondly, from the call to alternative interpretations stems a request to consider individual contexts and situations. To discover two or three alternatives tells the agent that individual existence expresses itself in various ways. Furthermore, individual expressions foster the recognition that feelings and sensations are an inherent part of expressivity, including traditional sayings. The recognition of individual expression built in the voice of traditional sayings is pedagogic in that it reminds us of the importance of context and situatedness. Pedagogy lies within a careful and attentive listening to unique situations.

Thirdly, while affirming individual existences and unique situations by expressing many alternatives, traditional sayings direct to a unity of existence, a We-ness that has been referred to. From this sense of unity, of being together, from this yearning for a closing of the immensity of the circle of existence comes the reassurance of solidarity.

Pedagogy incites to other possibilities; it allows new worlds to speak, to call, as it were. The Yoruba saying "The king's goat ate the king's yam" (Lindfors & Owomoyela, 1973, p. 38) is at first mystifying, but from the incomprehensible saying comes a call that presses us to inquire further and ask ourselves: what could it mean? Gradually, the saying disperses its opaqueness and we glimpse at a world of empathy and sympathy. If the king's goat does an ill deed, it will not be punished because it is in, so to speak, the same family. Similarly, brothers or sisters should not make a fuss over an offense. No malice should be borne. The saying divulges a sense of in-group forgiveness. But the call has not stopped its calling since there is a sense that more is at stake. And we are invited to explore possibilities that the Yoruba interpretation ignores. Can this in-group forgiveness not also be seen as favoritism? When the king's goat eats the king's yam, no harm comes to the goat. But what if the yam is stolen and eaten by a beggar? Will such a person be punished? What kind of socio-economic inequalities underly the saying? The saying could provide a sarcastic comment on the social system that allows a favoured individual or group to enjoy special previleges at the cost of others. We would now need to look at specific moments in the Yoruba life. And so, the quest

goes on asking more questions, finding some answers, and re-asking questions. At the same time, the call forces us to consider specific situations: that of the poor, that of the rich, that of the in-group. The call invites us to be attentive to the particular and the unique. The call, pedagogically, has led to the observation of relationships in the world.

The pedagogic call of traditional sayings leads to liberation; it allows for the formulation of individual perspectives within We-ness. Liberation, from the Latin *liber*, meaning free (Picoche, 1979, p. 392), is always in relation to oppression, to indoctrication. A liberation is always a liberation from. In this sense, the exploration usage of traditional sayings tells that formalized language or rules always precede the creation of variants or new sayings. It is because of the dialectic new-old that liberation is possible. In the same way, individual expression is only possible because of tradition (see chapter four). The I can be expressive because of tradition. Liberation comes as the constant shifting between old and new forms, between I and We. As for the Dadaists who were able to find in the most stereotyped forms of language an expression of their revolt against that very stereotyping, we are able to find an expression of ourselves because of the impersonal, non-I form of language. The text becomes the pretext. It is ironic that we find in what is seen as the very object of oppression (Bersianik, 1976) the very instrument of liberation. As says an old Yoruba proverb:

> The thing that he went looking for in Sokoto
> was in the pocket of his sokoto [trousers]. (Lindfors & Owomoyela, 1973, p. 43)

Exploration has brought to light the importance of uniqueness and situatedness and has placed them in dialectic with tradition. Prescriptive usage of sayings had shown the danger of domination over the individual context. Exploration restores the dialectic between union and separation, text and context, that the slogan had broken. In the end, liberation is always a breaking away from, be it from the I or from the We.

D. Conclusion

Paroemiologists study the situatedness of traditional sayings by documenting actual usage situations. This body of research served as an initial guide along with Gobard's and Reboul's functions of language in order to establish the main types of relationships that are found in the usage of traditional sayings. In this chapter, an interpretation of text and context in usage situations was presented. Four major types of relationships were discussed: communion, description, prescription, and exploration. The notion of relationship demands that we approach the subject of study from a constant dialectic between entities, agents, texts. An element is always in relation to another. Then, usage was seen as a relation between union and separation. The two terms are a reformulation of the entities of chapters four and five: I, We, They, world, text, and context.

First, the communion relationship shows that being together is primordial in the experience of traditional sayings. It is complete We-ness, or union. The voice of traditional sayings allows a listening to a unity, a collectivity from within the usage situation, as it did from within tradition. Communion tells us that we are together in the saying and solidarity is felt.

Secondly, descriptive usage of traditional sayings proposes that, along with union, a harmonious separation is possible. A descriptive saying stands apart from the unique context in which it is used, yet does not stand in opposition to it. Rather, it parallels the situation, illuminates it. The metaphor of the mirror was used to show how a saying condenses past experiences and reflects them onto a new situation.

Thirdly, prescriptive usage of sayings shows how the slogan can seek to dominate a situation. The separation effected between I/We and They serves a power game between the two agents, with the user of a saying having the advantage of camouflaged intents. However, separation needs not lead to a power struggle if dialogue is allowed. This section permitted the view that a disposition of attentiveness between text and context, between agents, changes the power game into a pedagogical dialogue.

Finally, exploration was linked to Starobinski's notion of poetry. The dialectic relationship between text and context in the transformation of a saying became an example for the relationships I/We/They that underlie this entire study. It was shown through the Dadaists' work that even a rebellious, at times anarchist, group continued the union-separation dialectic. Liberation stands in the constant shuffle between the two. After chapters four and five, which studied traditional sayings from the perspective of objectifications, chapter six reinstated situatedness as actual usage in a context. In so doing, the difficulty of expressing particular, unique situations led to constant efforts and needs of thinking in specific terms. Yet, in the specific emerged the common, the general. When speaking of pedagogy, the same difficulty is met. Pedagogy, we tend to think along with Louchet (1967, p.225), is a methodology. We often view pedagogy as a series of steps followed in the instruction of children. It is "the science of teaching [...] the theory of how to teach" (Funk & Wagnalls, 1966, p. 929). This is the easy way to talk about pedagogy. But pedagogy, as it gradually emerged through traditional sayings, becomes a mode of being, a way of relating in the world when protection, not domination, appears. Because it is a mode of being, a way of relating to others, the language of pedagogy has to refer to the totality of a situation with all its uniqueness. A suggestive language, which tells of feelings and sensations as well as reason, is needed. This is why it becomes increasingly difficult to conclude this chapter; it is difficult to condense the context, the examples of a chapter, into a few sentences where the pedagogic voice of traditional sayings resounds.

In usage, the pedagogic voice of traditional sayings speaks of a sense of communion where solidarity and protection foster a being together. In such a context, humans do not fear each other; on the contrary, they are confident. Through description, traditional sayings also tell us that pedagogic actions guide gently, go along with. There is, in the pedagogic act, an attentiveness to others which allows others to act in their own manner; yet this attentiveness responds at the opportune moment.

VII. To end the journey

A. The meaning of co-responsibility

An investigation of the word "tradition" (chapter four) was initially seen as the point of departure for a study on the difficulty on how it can be said that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice. Next, we turned to language (chapter five) in order to deepen our understanding of the motivating question that guided the quest. Then, tradition and language were reunited in usage situations. Each chapter attempted to restore an undertanding of the pedagogic voice of language. Chapter seven, as the concluding chapter, seeks to reunite tradition, language, and usage. It allows each to speak together about pedagogy. Initially, Heidegger's notion of co-responsibility will be presented as a metaphor for the dialogue which guides traditional sayings as language and as pedagogy. Secondly, pedagogical implications of a study of traditional sayings will be sought. Thirdly, with the advantage of hindsight, the journey travelled will be halted with self-reflective comments.

Heidegger in "The question concerning technology" (1977) seeks to unveil the essence of modern technology. In so doing, he furnishes a framework which reflects well the link between the elements of traditional sayings: tradition as the content or material of traditional sayings, language as their form, and the agent-intent in usage. He indicates, through the example of the silversmith shaping a silver chalice, where domination could enter the scene of human endeavours. Heidegger's perspective is presented here as a metaphor of relationships between diverse elements of a phenomenon. It is ironic to note that Heidegger, who was criticized for the absence of a concern with Other in his writings, can be used here as an example to help us understand intersubjective relationships between humans in pedagogy. It serves to highlight the importance of every aspects of a situation and directs attention to the attitude of attentiveness that underlies the pedagogic encounter. Heidegger states:

> For centuries philosophy has thought that there are four causes: (1) the *causa materialis*, the material, the matter out of which, for example, a silver chalice is made; (2) the *causa formalis*, the form, the shape which the material enters; (3) the *causa finalis*, the end, for example, the sacrificial rite in relation to which the chalice

> required is determined as to its form and matter; (4) the *causa efficiens*, which brings about the effect that is, the finished, actual chalice, in this instance, the silversmith. [...] For a long time we have been accustomed to representing cause as that which brings something about. In this connection, to bring about means to obtain results, effects. The *causa efficiens*, but one among the four causes, sets the standard for all causality. [...] The four causes are the ways, all belonging at once to each other, of being responsible for something else. (pp. 289-290)

In his inimitable style, Heidegger reviews each cause, in turn. For example, the silver for the silver chalice is the matter out of which it is shaped. The chalice "owes thanks to the silver for that which it consists" (p. 289). The chalice is also endebted to the "chaliceness," the idea, the *eidos* of the chalice. Without this notion of what a chalice is, the chalice would not exist. The purpose, being the third cause is the intent that directs human efforts into the making of the chalice. Finally, the silversmith is co-responsible for setting the chalice on its way to realization. The silversmith's pondering and acting have allowed the chalice to come into existence.

When transposed to the topic of traditional sayings, tradition is the matter out of which sayings are moulded. As Heidegger might have said, it is thanks to the traditional background that sayings emerge. Language formulates tradition in a form. Language gives a fixed, definite shape to tradition, it is the *causa formalis*. Intent, cause, or purpose gives direction to the sayings. A saying is used prescriptively or poetically because it is seen as an appropirate way of using it. Intent names the orientation, the direction of usage. The agent, or *causa efficiens* leads the saying by causing its coming into the midst of a situation, a context. A saying is said or written by a human agent. This agent causes the saying to be here and now, within a context.

Heidegger's position is interesting because it corroborates the experience that we have of traditional sayings. First, Heidegger does not give the human agent or actor, the most important stage seat. On the contrary, he sets the human actor at the same level as the other three causes. Tradition and formulaic language are an important part of the experience of traditional sayings. They designate the power that lies in tradition and formalized language. As such, sayings are an ideal vehicle to reveal the power of language, over and above the

human agent and her or his intent.

Heidegger does not merely state the importance of the four causes; he reveals the chain that links them. He demonstrates a co-responsibility between the four causes. Co-responsibility allows for an equality of status between responses. Responses, from the Latin *spondare* is akin to guarantee; it is linked to spouse in the sense of making a formal engagement. Response points to the response-ability which is solemnly taken. Like an oath, response spells out the need to give. Etymologically, the word "response" tells about a father who promises to give a daughter in marriage. Co-responsibility discloses an attentiveness to the other causes and more importantly, an ability to give in, and to, the other causes.

Domination, or instrumentality as Heidegger puts it in the context of objects, appears when the human agent or actor, setting the intent or goal, loses response-ability. The agent becomes the dominator of the scene, as it was illustrated in advertising. In the prescriptive traditional saying usage of the slogan, tolerance to language and tradition, as responses, is lost in an effort to control and total directiveness. Action is gratuitously imposed on the world and others. "Yes folks, things go better with Coke"; it does not matter if you are old and senile, if it will give you ulcers or cancer, if it stunts your growth, the agent and the goal have spoken: "Things go better with Coke." Heidegger calls such an approach "enframing." Humans stand decisively over the moment of understanding. The occasioning encounter is controlled and contrived. In the example of the making of a chalice, the artisan could set out to make a chalice. Silver could be chosen, not because it is a good medium which stands the passage of time, but because the silver color is favoured by the artisan and friends; because it will give added prestige to the user. The artisan could, probably without success even over a long period of time, attempt to create a chalice exactly as it was drawn, without error. The effort would be to make the silver conform to the idea or goal previously elaborated. Artists know that the moulding of a piece evolves as much from the matter as from a preconceived idea. But, domination demands that the idea and agent be obeyed. Other elements are seen as less important, or even as unimportant.

Within Heidegger's notion of "enframing" is evidenced the dimension of rational enframing. The phenomenon of slogans displays that language can become subjugated to the power of reason. Domination, as a model for language use, demands that the goal or intent be seen as an end point towards which reason will calculate or trace the itinerary. If selling Coke is the goal, or intent, advertising will search the most efficient means; through carefully designed advertisement, all rationally conceived alternatives will be exploited. For example, the Coke company will ask: Does seeing hot air balloon rides give most people a sense of freedom, a sense of desires being fulfilled, of good times? If so, the company will use hot air ballons in its pitch for sales. Advertisement rationally calculates all the best moves towards its goal. Through rational planning, ads exploit the irrational in their viewers. The context is reminiscent of Pascal who, it has been noted in chapter two (p. 24) said:

> La puissance des rois est fondée sur la raison et sur la folie du peuple, et bien plus sur la folie. La plus grande et importante chose du monde a pour fondement la faiblesse. Et ce fondement est admirablement sûr, car il n'y a rien de plus que cela, que le peuple sera faible. Ce qui est fondé sur la saine raison est bien mal fondé, comme l'estime la sagesse. (1962, p. 51)

Advertising has taken over the role of kings and queens. It bases its domination upon the irrational behaviour of people. Domination, in this way, does not only define enframing but specifies a rationally designed enframing.

The learned-popular debate in traditional sayings hinged on a tendency to value reason through the maxim because it manifested a greater rational grasp on the world and on others. Traditional sayings have constantly reminded us of their participative dimension; holistically, the whole being participates in the saying and/or hearing of a traditional saying. However, through the maxim, rational enframing and contemplation are invited. The slogan presses this tendency to domination. Saying traditionally is a mode of being; sloganizing is a mode of enframing through rationality.

To join pedagogy and the language of cause and effect is to indicate where domination has provided the wrong influence in education. The *causa finalis*, the intent or the effect spurred by the agent, with the *causa efficiens* have often been seen in modern education as the

all-powerful model of learning. And so, objectives, strategies, and evaluation have become the language of education. Agents, teachers as it were, are requested to live with children with an "enframing" attitude. Commonness has been lost in favour of the enemy tactics of strategies: attempting to pro-ject (throw ahead) an ob-ject (thrown towards) on a target, the student. Whatever happened to the Swahili proverb "To teach is to take good care of [one's children]" (Scheven, 1981, p. 383)? "Care" has changed into "enframing": fitting into a frame.

Through traditional sayings, a co-responsibility was witnessed between tradition, language, the speaker, and the goal. Co-responsibility means to allow responses from each domain, responses which, in turn draw from each other. In a four-way dialectic, as an echo, they speak to each other and illuminate the way. To be responsible is to take a solemn engagement with quasi-religious reverence; etymologically it refers to the responses of the oracles, to allow and foster revealing and echoing. Tradition and language cannot be subordinated to the agent and to the goal. They must rest on the same pedestal. Similarly, curriculum, as a kind of traditional saying, must be allowed to speak its tradition and its language. It must point, beyond itself, to new vistas, to revealing.

In allowing traditional sayings, as the pedagogic voice of language, to point to a revealing of pedagogy, they tell us that we must be humble before the powers that lead us. Sayings admonish us to see curriculum as a saying pointing away from itself, as a weathervane; it points to the process of unconcealment of the world, but not *the* unconcealment, for that would be to enframe and to dominate learning.

Curriculum, as a programme, is a race to the end or to the objectives. The curriculum is to be prepared, taught, or given to the students who will, in turn, demonstrate that they have assimilated its content. Such an orientation remains within an attitude of domination. The teacher, as human agent, sets the intent to learning just like one sets a clock for seven o'clock in the morning. The race is off! The content and the languge tell this: "The teacher, the school system, the department of education see this knowledge as important, as good for you." This is domination. However, if curriculum is not seen as programme but rather as a

curriculum vitae, the living of life itself, the language of curriculum will tell about the past, about the future. The context will also speak of past and future possibilities. The receiver will be allowed a retort. Domination will be replaced by dia-logue, co-responsibility, and each element, in turn, will direct to the best curriculum vitae possible.

As pedagogues, we must heed the mysterious voices which speak all around us. They draw us to them as we draw them to us. As educators, we need to establish our co-responsibility not only with our goals, but with language and tradition. And when we ask from whence comes the pedagogic voice of traditional sayings? Then, we must first set aside instrumentality, we must refrain from domination. When tradition is allowed to speak, echoes of commonness, of ethical views, of past experiences, of stability, of authority as wisdom, begin to sound out. From language resounds a voice of complete participation as in orality, of enticing plays of presence and absence, of diversity in meaning, of familiarity. And when we, as human agents, enter with our goals into a four-way dialogue, a quadrologue, a constant dialectic between critique and consent is author-ized. So, shifts between communion as the ultimate of consent, and exploration, as the ultimate of creative critique, are set forth. Pedagogy lies within this being with language and tradition. The pedagogic voice of traditional sayings warns us to be suspicious of domination in education and it reminds us that living, rather than calculating, needs to become predominant. It begs that the dialogue not be terminated by domination from human agents.

The lesson of attentiveness to language and tradition brought about by traditional sayings and the demand of co-responsibility may seem outdated. However, they serve as reminders that, even though instrumentality may pervade modern technology, it is inappropriate in education. While objects may, more justifiably, be subordinated to human goals, humans must be respected. A clear distinction has to be drawn between humans and objects. Herein lies the crux of educational problems: humans particularly children, are acted upon as objects. Pedagogy is excluded from such an approach.

In conclusion, traditional sayings have offered three domains for study: tradition, language, intent, or goal. Domination is seen as the subjugation of tradition and language to the end and the agent. The end and the agent together decide and pre-ordain events. Pedagogy, however, is a co-responsibility (a co-response) of each element (*causa*). All four have an importantly equal role to play in the learning event. But, domination presses power upon the four causes and they are in danger of becoming indoctrination. Each element has to be restored to equilibrium and, because pedagogy is not a method, but a way of being, openness has to be lived through communion, description, exploration, and prescription which avoids domination.

B. Pedagogical implications for the classroom

When a study is done in the context of education, the concluding questions become: What does this mean for the classroom? What are the implications? At the onset, the etymology of the word "implication" must be recalled. The word comes from the Latin *in* and *plicare* (Funk & Wagnalls, 1966, p. 635). "Implication" refers to the folding of a fabric. It tells us that the transfer from theory to practice is folding a fabric in a different manner. For traditional sayings, this means that they are explored from a different situational angle. Traditional sayings are folded in a way that exposes the pedagogic experience in the classroom. Primarily, it requires a look at situatedness within the classroom and reflection on it. Implications, then, will not refer here to recipes. Instead, pedagogical implications for the classroom will highlight the general charecteristic of the pedagogic voice of traditional sayings, the general ambiance that traditional sayings generate.

Implications will not refer specifically to a series of recommendations, and this, for two reasons. First, a situation has to be considered in its uniqueness before any advice can be given. It is the task of everyone to reflect on one's own unique situation, to fold, unfold, and refold the fabric of one's life. Secondly, to give recommendations would be to enframe and to seek domination over a situation, a context, and that is what traditional sayings tell us we must

avoid. A recommendation would take the form of "If such and such a condition occurs, then you should do such and such." Or, it would say: "If you want such and such a result, (a goal), then you act in such and such a manner." These foster domination by human agents and do not allow the context to speak, to have its own voice. So, implications that allow a new fold into the fabric of classroom life will be given. Recommendations that seek to direct classroom life through domination or enframing will be avoided.

Now, what does a study on the difficulty of understanding how it can be said that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice imply for future pedagogical actions? First, the difficulty of understanding, as a topic, relates to a process that grounds pedagogy. The process of understanding through the dissertation writing, through the guidance of advisor and committe members, through the dialogues with the texts of Paul Ricoeur and of traditional sayings, was an effort to break through the difficulties which prevent understanding. The process was guided by a deep question, one which seasoned my curriculum vitae. As a product, then, this study is itself the display of a pedagogic process.

Secondly, the difficulty of understanding relates to the classroom situation by allowing a glimpse at the vastness and intricacies of situations. This study met difficulties on various level: that of understanding how language can talk about, and to, experience; that of understanding notions like tradition and situation; that of coming to comprehension of usage after the fact, often on an anecdotal basis; that of including feelings and sensations; that of grasping the infinite uniqueness of events; that of dealing with human interactions. All these difficulties relate to the major difficulty of understanding the fullness of a phenomenon. For the classroom, this study on difficulty is a warning that the classroom is a complex situation that demands attentive and patient efforts before it can be understood, in part.

Thirdly, the significance of traditional sayings use in the classroom lies less in their actual usage than in the understanding that they allow. It was not the purpose of this dissertation to claim that traditional sayings should be used in the classroom. Of course, traditional sayings can be used orally in the classroom or displayed on walls and in books.

They can be studied for vocabulary or syntax structure, for example. But then, so can other forms of language: poetry, songs, novels, fables, daily speech. The main thrust of traditional sayings, however, remains in the example that they give, in the worlds to be inhabited that they exhibit. The phrase from Ricoeur (1973, p. 140) "a world that I might inhabit" expresses the display of possibilities for life in its totalities, a world. Traditional sayings divulged this world in various ways: it is the example of pedagogy that they give.

The explorations of tradition have shown a world where objectifications like traditional sayings are shown to be part of the life that created them. In this life, the We is prominent. The world that we are invited to inhabit pedagogically is one where objects do not act upon us, like curriculum as a programme. We are invited to seek the life that spun the object and we are allowed to sense the commonness that it divulges. This world of We-ness is a world that the classroom could display. At the same time, We-ness introduces the struggle between I and They. Our sense of We-ness and of trust together should be complemented by our withdrawal from it, our sense that I am an individual, an I. In the classroom this could mean, for example, that the teacher guides a recovery of the meaning of tradition as the common world of the ancestors. I could allow the restoration a positive connotation to the word "tradition" and a feeling of belonging with the past.

The world of language that traditional sayings invite us to inhabit pedagogically (see chapter five) restores a dialectic between participation and distanciation. The We was presented as a living of a total commonness while distanciation emerged in the language of the maxim. Primarily, the language of traditional sayings is an example that language speaks about experience and life. An investigation of how language speaks in the context of traditional sayings is an invitation to seek, in the classroom, the life that words display. It is an effort to give an important place to language as a speaker.

The world of usage that traditional sayings displayed (see chapter six) spoke to the attitudes brought to relationships. This world highlighted that pedagogy occurs between human beings. The pedagogic relationships between humans are based on an attitude of attentiveness

to others as well as to the speaking of objectifications. An attitude of attentiveness reveals the importance of dialogue, of communion, of communication. At the same time, it shows that separation is always complemented by communion. In the classroom, this could mean that students could be allowed to live the commonness of life that a saying displays through discussions, mimes, or writing. They could also be allowed to indicate where they are not in the saying, where it does not speak of their experience. Students could be further encouraged to modify the saying in the light of their experiences.

The difficult process of uncovering the pedagogic voice of traditional sayings is a process which could go on in the classroom. The questions that are raised in regards to life, to language, to tradition, to pedagogy lead the quest for an understanding that seasons the curriculum vitae. The answers that are glimpsed allow the quest to go on : How is it that we can say that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice?

C. A note on *methodos*

A reflective study based on understanding demands that the journey be ended with reflections on the process of understanding. A Swahili proverb says: "He who carefully examines the sea is not a traveller" (Scheven, 1981, p. 210). One who charts may be a geographer, an oceanographer, or even an astronomer, but he or she is not a traveller. In chapter three, the etymology of the word *methodos* was displayed to reveal the travelling moment inherent within methodology. As in the Swahili proverb, the first step is to travel. Then, after the travelling has taken place, one can chart the maps. This dissertation was indeed a travel and, at the concluding moments of the voyage, I wish to briefly stand back and reflect upon the travels, as *meta* and *hodos* request that it be done.

The first reflection is that the voyage did not bring me back to the point of departure, or rather, the countryside may be the same but, my eyes have changed. The sayings "Success breeds success" and "Money is sweeter that honey" no longer appear as facile, gratuitous nor unimportant. I have gained a profound respect for traditional sayings and I now find that I

need to speak about them, and through their words. I have also acquired a tolerance to the world that they exhibit. For example, I have become at peace with sayings such as "He who carefully examines the sea is not a traveller" that exclude me as a woman. Now I know that it is part of the pedagogy of traditional sayings that I am allowed to dispute them. Critique is quite acceptable, even necessary, and in no way does it degrade the saying. On the contrary, the saying is the occasion for critique. In that way, the travel has changed my view, and the above example furnishes only a minute portion of the new perspective.

Secondly, as I progressed over a period of four years, the paradigmatic shift from explanation to understanding in my research approach was deeply felt. The initial period of composition still relied heavily on explanations, my own as well as those of researchers. As time passed, and efforts evolved, I felt a gradual release of the grasp that the explanatory mode held on me. When I review chapter four and compare it to chapter six, I notice that paroemiologists have become less central to the study, but that examples gained the status of mirrors. At the onset, I wanted to tell in words *about* the pedagogic essence of traditional sayings. Later, I felt a need to show a discourse that relies less on rational explanations in order to understand. Explanations are still important now, but they have attained a status similar to that of proverbs with exclusive terminology: they are points of departure for critique.

Thirdly, the guiding question was always, how is it that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice? However, the topic of the study became clear only after it had been written and rewritten many times. The hermeneutics of understanding the topic at hand showed itself in the way the question guided all inquiries. I searched in tradition, in language, in usage situations, how it could be said that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice. I attempted to recover the experiences, feelings, and sensations that the words spoke of. I tried to separate the chaff from the wheat kernel as I asked what paroemiologists said about tradition that spoke to the experience of tradition. In the process, it was difficult to reclaim this experience since the notion of tradition that we hold has covered the lived sense that we

have of it. Similarly, as I attempted to disclose the voice of language, current notions of language as power, as ideology, constantly forced me to return to the point of departure: the speaking of language. Gradually, the topic appeared: What makes it so difficult to understand how it is that it can be said that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice? The entire study was an effort to break through this difficulty in order to understand what it is that language unveils. This dissertation is the display of my efforts to cope with this difficulty.

Finally, I feel as if I have been touched by the pedagogic voice of traditional sayings. A deep sense of pedagogy has been glimpsed. The difficulty of understanding how it can be said that traditional sayings speak with a pedagogic voice has been pierced. More profoundly than words can divulge is an understanding that the meaning of the idea of pedagogy must be restored as a guiding of children.

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